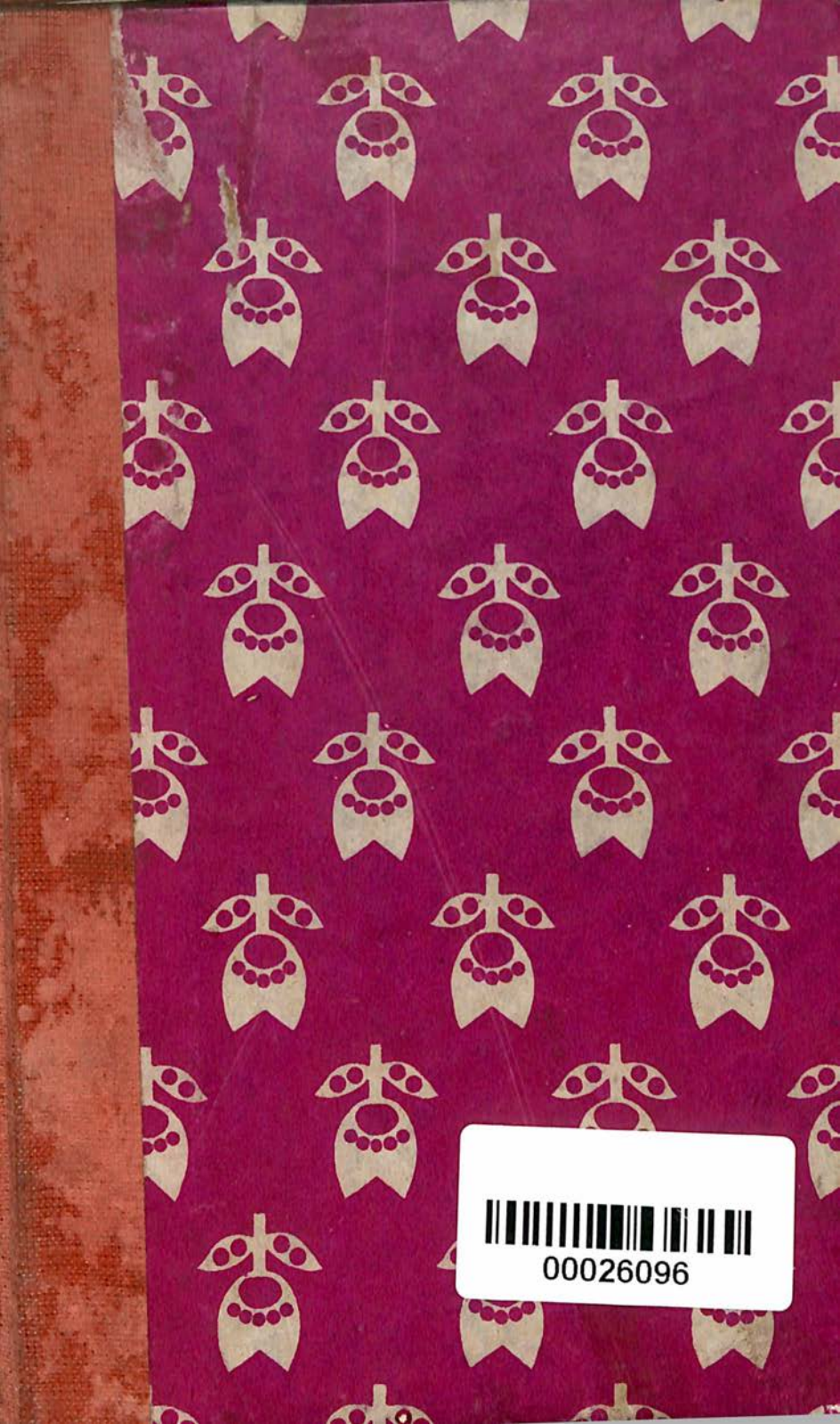
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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ARABELLA STUART

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ARABELLA STUART

CHAPTER I

IN the autumn of the year 1574 the Countess of Shrewsbury, accompanied by her daughter Elizabeth, travelled to one of their splendid homes, Rufford Abbey. Ostensibly the Countess went thither to receive an honoured guest, Margaret, Countess of Lennox, who, together with her son, was journeying from London to Settrington, and must thus pass within a mile or two of Rufford.

Presumably the Earl of Shrewsbury believed in this simple plan. Had he penetrated to his wife's real reasons he, foreseeing the complications certain to arise, would have forbidden the journey.

The Countess of Shrewsbury had some little time before attempted to negotiate unsuccessfully a marriage between Elizabeth and a son of the Duchess of Suffolk. Nothing daunted, however, she was still determined on a wedding—only the bridegroom was changed. It must be supposed that the Countess was gleeful over her former failure, for this newly proposed marriage was with no less a person than Charles Stuart, Earl of Lennox, and it presented

dazzling possibilities. It had, too, all the charm of forbidden fruit. The Countess understood the politic of her day as well as she understood her Queen, Elizabeth, and must have realized that it would suit neither.

It is possible that the Duchess of Suffolk and the Countess of Shrewsbury hatched the mischief between them. The Countess may have been angry at the refusal of her daughter's hand, and the Duchess, to pacify her, may have suggested and to a certain extent aided in this change of bridegrooms. There seems to have been double-dealing somewhere, if the Earl of Shrewsbury's statement in the following letter is to be believed. Probably the Countess deceived her husband as to the reason that led her to entertain the Lennox family, and only when the affair had progressed too far to admit of his interference did she allow her wishes to become known.

The Earl might, of course, have chosen to feign ignorance, hoping thus to escape the Queen's censure. But it seems more probable that his ignorance of the commencement of the negotiations was genuine, as throughout his life he feared the consequences attendant on this marriage.

I give his first letter of explanation to Lord Burghley below.

Unfortunately the blanks occur in the original, and, in addition, the Earl of Shrewsbury's style is nowhere remarkable for its lucidity.

"SHEFFIELD, *November 5th*, 1574.

"My very good lord and friend,

"It seemeth by your letters to me there be that seeks some doubtfulness in the Queen's Majesty of the lord . . . and Suffolk near these parts, and therewith to rethe (? rate) me and my wife; for that my wife

sought the marriage of her daughter as oft, and many times, and in sundrey places, she before hath done and that some repugnant is found betwixt my Lady . . . 's writings and mine, of her being desired . . . to Rufford or not. These and the manner of dealing in these matters, your Lordship writes her Majesty may perhaps counsel otherwise than before she hath done. Surely, my Lord I take these Lords to be her Majesty's faithful subjects, well thought of by her Majesty; and during their abodes at my house, I could gather no cause of misliking them. They were for her Majesty's sake the welcomer to me, as others have been and should be to me whom now her Majesty favours, and when I writ unto your Lordship of both these Lords coming to my house I received the knowledge from my wife that the Lady Suffolk told her, that the Lady . . . meant to come to her house in the north and that she would bring her to Chatsworth, if she could entreat her to; but if she could not herself would. Both I and my wife when we considered thought it would be better to have them at Rufford than Chatsworth and made that house ready. When we heard that the Lady . . . was coming to Groundsthorpe I made a full account of both their comings and took occasion of small matter to write unto your lordship.

"My wife hearing of their being at Granton sent the next day Henry Camen to Rutrick to desire them both to come to Rufford and there found but the one: so my wife . . . The Lord was loth to come but by great desire of my wife's messenger. And as to the notion of marriage betwixt the Duchess's son and my daughter it was not . . . nor hid from the world; it hath been in talk betwixt them more than a year past and not thought of as a matter worth her Majesty's hearing. To be plain with your Lordship I wished the match and put to my helping hand to further it: and was contented by my Lady Suffolk's great entreat, to suffer my wife for that purpose to accompany her

to his house at Grovesthorpe, and at her return she thought it in good forwardness and so hoped, till she saw the . . . not to, and then understanding the young gentleman was otherwise disposed without . . . her mind and this is all the dealing I know of that Lord.

"Lady L. . . . being . . . and as I hear sickly, rested her at Rufford five days and kept most her chamber and in that time the young man her son fell into likeing with my wife's daughter before intended . . . and such likeing was between them, as my wife tells me she makes no doubt of a match, and hath so tied themselves upon their own liking as . . . cannot part. My wife hath sent her to Lady . . . and the young man is so far in love that belike he is sick without her. This taking effect I shall be well at quiet, there is few noblemen's sons in England that she hath not prayed me to deal for at one time or another; and now this comes unlooked for and without thanks to me. Thus have I at large particularly made account of these ladies, and their dealings at my house. I have for your Lordship full knowledge; and that you may meet with whatsoever, shall be more or otherwise imagined, and preferred to her Majesty . . . against me or my wife. I have been more tedious and . . . in expressing the manner of every . . . that I know of concerning these ladies and their dealings, than needful to trouble your Lordship with; assuring myself you will as friendly satisfy her Majesty in all these things, as I have plainly writ them, and as your Lordship doth profess to me; and as my special trust is in your Lordship. I and my wife wish your Lordship as heartily well as to ourselves.

"At Sheffield, the 5*th* of *November* 1574.

"Your Lordship's assured friend and kinsman

"SHREWSBURY.

"I have here enclosed . . . returned my Lady's . . . your Lordship."

His second letter, written nearly a month later, deals more plainly with the marriage.

". . . I understand of late your Majesty's displeasure is sought against my wife for marriage of her daughter to my Lady Lennox's son. I must confess to your Majesty as true it is it was dealt in suddenly and without my knowledge, but, as I dare undertake and insure to your Majesty, for my wife, she, finding her daughter disappointed of young Barté[2] where she hoped, and that the other young gentleman was inclined to love with a few days' acquaintance did her best to further her daughter to this match; without having therein any other intent or respect than with reverent duty towards your Majesty she ought."[1]

The letter concludes with a reminder of his and his wife's services, and a pretty speech regarding the Queen's wisdom.

So, as we have seen, the Countess of Shrewsbury journeyed to Rufford to meet the Countess of Lennox, and it was there, in all probability, that the marriage took place of Charles Stuart and Elizabeth Cavendish which aroused so much angry excitement.

To understand why it did so, it will be necessary to turn for a few moments to the pedigree and position of both families in the political world of their day.

Charles Stuart, fifth Earl of Lennox, was the younger and only surviving child of Matthew, the fourth Earl, and the Lady Margaret Douglas, daughter of Archibald, Earl of Angus, and Margaret, Queen Dowager of Scotland.

Thus Charles was a great-grandson of Henry the Seventh, and great-nephew of Henry the Eighth. His elder brother was Lord Darnley, the second husband of Mary, Queen of Scots.

[1] Lodge. [2] This was the Duchess of Suffolk's son, Mr. Bertie.

By Charles' marriage with Elizabeth Cavendish, he had one daughter, Arabella, who through her father was near kinswoman of the sovereigns of Scotland and England. Her royal descent must be borne in mind, as to it may be ascribed the many storms that troubled her life. Margaret, Countess of Lennox, must have been a woman of unusual courage to seek such a match for her son. She knew perfectly in what light Queen Elizabeth would regard it, and how she would deal with the promoters of it. One would have thought that after the miseries and sorrows life had brought her she would have been content to rest in the Queen's favour, and not have sought to again rouse the royal anger. For Margaret Lennox had from her birth passed a life of stress and agitation;[1] now suffering for her own faults, now for those of others. She was born during the flight of her mother to England, and for the first eighteen months lived at her uncle Henry's Court. From there, mother and daughter journeyed to Bedford, where Lord Angus waited to escort them back to Scotland. After many violent quarrels, her parents separated, and when Margaret was little more than three years old, Angus took her from her mother's care and carried her away to his stronghold, Tantallon Castle. There she lived for some time, surrounded by a household suitable in its state to her close connection with the sovereigns of England and Scotland. Finally, Angus was forced to retire across the border, and then followed many years of wandering and poverty. Throughout those miserable years Angus retained possession of his daughter, taking her at last to France. It was not without many struggles that Margaret's mother had resigned her guardianship of

[1] For a further account of her see Strickland's *Margaret Douglas.*

the child. But as the little Margaret grew older, her attachment for the outlawed father strengthened, and that attachment brought upon her the enmity of her mother.

However, brighter days came at last to the girl. Henry the Eighth bestirred himself on her behalf. He needed a companion for his little daughter Mary, and Margaret her cousin was given the post; and as she was beautiful and charming, she managed eventually to obtain an annual income for her father and herself.

So for a time she prospered. She was lady-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn, and in the household of that Queen's child. More, she loved, and that with the royal sanction, a relative of Queen Anne's. When, however, that lady lost her head, and scruples as to Elizabeth's legitimacy began to trouble her father, Margaret's position changed. She became next heir to the throne, and Henry regarded it as an insult that his heiress should love the kinsman of his righteously executed queen. Yes, it was an insult, and Henry became greatly annoyed. Impeachment of high treason followed, and Margaret and her lover were sentenced to death. The King's mercy, however, prevented the sentence from taking effect, and the lovers languished in a prison until death released the one, and the birth of an heir to the King the other. Soon after, we find Margaret again lady-in-waiting, this time to Anne of Cleves, later to Catherine Howard. Then again imprisonment, followed by her reappointment as lady-in-waiting to Catherine Parr. Finally, her uncle decided that she would be better married, and gave her for husband Matthew, Earl of Lennox, with whom she retired to his house in Yorkshire. Then came the

death of her uncle, and the succession of Edward the Sixth, which, as she and her children were devout and eager followers of the Church of Rome, did not benefit her greatly.

With Mary as Queen, however, her path became easier; even when Elizabeth ascended the throne, her prosperity continued for a short time. Then followed more imprisonment, result of plottings on Margaret's part which it is beyond the scope of this book to consider.

After some time her husband was liberated, and she was left alone to bear the Queen's displeasure, which increased on the marriage of Lord Darnley with the Queen of Scotland. Only after Darnley's murder did Margaret obtain her release, when as grandmother to the future King of Scotland she found her position greatly improved.

From then onwards for several years she seems to have been convinced of the connivance of Mary of Scotland in Darnley's death, and she frequently prayed Elizabeth to bring her guilty daughter-in-law to justice. Elizabeth, steadfast in refusal to do any such thing, thought fit, however, to continue her favour to the Countess.

What changes took place in the latter's opinion of her daughter-in-law, and induced her to risk the Queen of England's wrath by the marriage of her son to Elizabeth Cavendish, we shall presently see.

Elizabeth's mother, the redoubtable Countess of Shrewsbury, "Bess of Hardwicke," was a daughter of John Hardwicke, of Hardwick House, and his wife Elizabeth. The Countess of Shrewsbury married four times: first, Robert Barlow, who has nothing to do with this history. Second, Sir William Cavendish, to whom

she bore eight children, six of whom survived. Of these six, Elizabeth, Arabella's mother, was the second child. Third, Sir William St. Loe; and fourth, George Talbot, sixth Earl of Shrewsbury, one of the greatest gentlemen of England. At the time of his marriage he was a widower with a large family, and forthwith his new wife determined on the intermarriage of two of his children with two of her children by her second husband; namely, Gilbert Talbot and Mary Cavendish, and Henry Cavendish and Grace Talbot.

I have felt it necessary to give a somewhat detailed account of this family, as certain members of it appear prominently throughout Arabella's life. Her step-grandfather, the sixth Earl, was a Knight of the Garter, Lord-Lieutenant of York, Nottingham, and Derby, and High Steward of the Kingdom. He possessed the castles and manors of Rufford, Sheffield, Tutbury, Welbeck, Bolsover, Worksop, and Wingfield. From her brother and her second husband the Countess inherited Hardwick and Chatsworth.

It will be seen from the foregoing account, that the Earl of Shrewsbury, both from his rank and wealth, held a position of great importance in the kingdom. He came, moreover, of a loyal stock, so that it was not surprising that in 1568 Queen Elizabeth appointed him to yet another position of great trust. This was none other than that of gaoler to Mary, Queen of Scots. In June, 1568, the Earl of Shrewsbury prepared, according to his orders, his residence of Tutbury for the reception of that unfortunate woman newly entered into captivity; and for the ensuing fifteen years, captive and gaoler wearily endured with each other. I have mentioned that the Countess of Lennox for many years accused Mary of cognizance of Darnley's

murder, but by 1574 the Countess of Lennox was willing to forgive Mary's supposed share in the matter. Rather, perhaps, she was willing to appear to believe Mary's asseverations of guiltlessness. Both women were drawn together by their necessities. The Countess of Lennox by her anxiety regarding her future, and Mary by her belief that friendship with Darnley's mother would be the best means of refuting those accusations which caused some to withhold their help from her. Mr. Henderson says:—

"If Elizabeth died, and there was a general impression that she would not live long, Mary might very possibly succeed her; and though Lady Lennox thought it prudent to assert to Elizabeth that she never could have any dealings with the Queen of Scots, since, being flesh and blood, she could not forget the murder of her child, yet she did not wish to debar herself from all further favour from the possible Queen of England, who was also the mother of her grandchild."[1]

Mary was strictly guarded. Communication between her and the Countess of Lennox would not be encouraged. Before setting out on her journey to Rufford, the Countess had sounded Elizabeth as to her views on the subject, by asking her permission to accept an invitation from Lady Shrewsbury to visit her at Chatsworth. This Elizabeth forbade, and the Countess realized that any *rapprochement* between herself and her captive daughter-in-law would be difficult. But Lady Shrewsbury possessed an easy, nay, an official, access to the imprisoned Queen, and so—and so my Lady Lennox journeyed to Rufford, and saw reason to propitiate her ambitious hostess by the intermarriage of their children. Had Mary of Scotland

[1] *Mary, Queen of Scots*, by T. F. Henderson.

been domiciled with someone other than the Earl of Shrewsbury, it is probable that one more matrimonial negotiation must have been marked by the Countess "failure." Certainly had Arabella been spared the wealthy, imperious, scheming Elizabeth Shrewsbury as grandmother, she had also in all probability been spared some few of the miseries that haunted her after-life. The marriage was undoubtedly excellent for Elizabeth Cavendish, and her mother, that born *intrigante*, was eager to secure it.

Foreseeing a brilliant career for her daughter, and a great influx of importance for herself, she wedded her child in a breathless hurry, almost secretly, probably without the consent of her husband, certainly without the knowledge of her Queen.

Yet the immediate results of the marriage were such as to somewhat dim any future glories, even to the ardent spirit of "Bess of Hardwicke."

Elizabeth, the autocratic Queen, furious at the deadly affront of dispensing with her permission, fearful of the consequences which might ensue from the match, hurled wrathful menaces at all the parties concerned, when she heard of the marriage a month after it had occurred.

She next proceeded to summon both the Countesses of Lennox and Shrewsbury and Charles and Elizabeth Lennox to appear before her. The summons is dated November the 17th, and on the 3rd of December Margaret, Lady Lennox, wrote the following two letters of explanation and apology:—

"HUNTINGDON, *December* 3, 1574.

"My very good Lord,

"The great unquietness and trouble that I have had with passing these dangerous waters, which hath

many times enforced me to leave my way, which hath been some hindrance to me that hitherto I have not answered your Lordship's letters chiefly on that point wherein your Lordship, with other my friends (as your Lordship says) seems ignorant how to answer for me. And being forced to stay this present Friday in Huntingdon, somewhat to refresh myself, and my overlaboured mules, that are both crooked and lame with their extreme labour by the way, I thought good to lay open to your Lordship, in these few lines, what I have to say for me, touching my going to Rufford to my Lady of Shrewsbury, both being thereunto very earnestly requested, and the place not one mile distant out of my way. Yea, and a much fairer way, as is well to be proved; and my Lady meeting me herself upon the way, I could not refuse, it being near upon thirty miles from Sheffield.

"And as it was well known to all the country thereabouts that great provision was there made both for my Lady Suffolk and me—who friendly brought me on the way to Grantham, and so departed home again, neither she nor I knowing any such thing till the morning after I came to Newark. And so I meant simply and well, so did I least mistrust that my doings should be taken in evil part, for at my coming from her Majesty, I perceived that she misliked of my Lady of Suffolk being at Chatsworth, I asked her Majesty if I were bidden thither, for that had been my wonted way before, if I might go. She prayed me not, lest it should be thought I should agree with the Queen of Scots. And I asked her Majesty, if she could think so, for I was made of flesh and blood, and could never forget the murder of my child. And she said, 'Marry, by her faith she could not think so that I could forget it, for if I would I were a devil.' Now my Lord, for that hasty marriage of my son, Charles, after that he had entangled himself so that he could have none other, I refer the same to your Lordship's good con-

sideration, whether it was not most fitly for me to marry them, he being my only son and comfort that is left me. And your Lordship can bear me witness how desirous I have been to have had a match for him other than this. And the Queen's Majesty, much to my comfort, to that end gave me good words at my departure."[1]

The other runs as follows :—

"My very good Lord,

"Assuring myself of your friendship I will use but few words at this present other than to let you understand of my wearisome journey and the heavy burden of the Queen's Majesty's displeasure, which I know well I have not deserved, together with a letter of small comfort that I received from my Lord of Leicester, here enclosed, the copy of my letter now sent to my Lord of Leicester; and I beseech you to use your friendship towards me as you see time. Thus with my hearty commendations, I commit you to Almighty God, whom I beseech to send you long life to your heart's desire.

"Huntingdon, this third of December.

"Your Lordship's assured loving friend,

"MARGARET LENNOX.

"To the Right Honourable my very good Lord and friend, the Lord Treasurer of England."[2]

The "letter of small comfort" mentioned in the above from the Earl of Leicester cannot be found.

But any excuses entirely failed to appease the Queen, whose wrath certainly fell more upon the Countess of Lennox than upon the Countess of Shrewsbury; possibly because she found it more difficult to fathom

[1] State Papers, as quoted by Strickland.
[2] State Papers, quoted from Strickland.

the motive of the former than of the latter. The Countess of Shrewsbury was known to be possessed of overweening pride, and the satisfaction of allying one of her children to the blood-royal must have been, as Elizabeth probably guessed, reason enough for the proceeding.

But with Margaret, Lady Lennox, the matter stood differently, and the Queen entirely disbelieved her disdainful treatment of the match as suggested in the letter quoted previously. Descended from a common ancestor, forced very probably by heredity into similar trains of thought, the two women, Elizabeth the Queen and Margaret the Countess, seem to have thoroughly distrusted each other, probably because each understood, and so could be prepared for the other's wiles.

At all events, Elizabeth was furious. Mary of Scotland, writing from her prison, mentions the Queen's extreme anger at the marriage, and her fears lest some deep intrigue should underlie it.

So Elizabeth enforced her will, and Margaret, Lady Lennox, made the weary journey to London, arriving there on December 12th. She immediately retired to her house at Hackney, where she remained with her son and daughter-in-law over Christmas. Elizabeth's seasonable greetings arrived on the Eve of the Festival, and took the form of an order to hold communication only with those persons named by the Privy Council.

Margaret was shortly afterwards removed to the Tower. She must by this time have been fairly inured to imprisonment, but she nevertheless appealed piteously against it. It is curious that this much-imprisoned woman suffered in each case for a connection

with matrimonial affairs, as did Arabella, her grandchild, after her.

The Countess of Shrewsbury, however, shared the same fate, and unless confinement greatly chastened her spirit, one wonders how the imperious lady stood the trial. Her husband escaped with a severe censure from Elizabeth, and a diminution for a short time of Court favour. But the Queen was assured of his loyalty towards her, and of his great fitness for the post of gaoler to her sister-queen, so her displeasure was not of long duration. Whether, however, she believed in his assurances of ignorance regarding the marriage or no, will never now be known.

The Earl, in addition to his many other cares and anxieties, was now obliged to bestir himself to aid his Lady and the Countess of Lennox, and some little time after Christmas he wrote the following letter to Lord Burghley.

"My very good Lord,

"Upon my Lady Lennox's earnest request, as to your Lordship I am sure shall appear, I have written to my Lords of the Council all I can find out of her behaviour towards this Queen and dealing when she was in these north parts; and if some disallowed of my writing (as I look they will, because they would have it thought that I should have enough to do to answer for myself) let such ( )[1] reprove, or find any ( )[1] respect to her Majesty in me or my wife is sought for, and then there is some cause to reprehend me, and for them to call out against me as they do. I take it that Lady Lennox be a subject in all respects worthy the Queen's Majesty's favour, and for the duty I bear her Majesty I am bound, methinks, to commend her

[1] Blanks in original.

so as I find her. Yea, and to entreat you, and all my Lords of the Council for her, to save her from blemish, if no offence can be found in her towards her Majesty. I do not nor can find the marriage of that Lady's son to my wife's daughter can anyway be taken with indifferent judgment, be any offence or contemptuous to her Majesty; and then, methinks, that benefit any subject may by law claim might be permitted to any of mine as well. But I must be plain with your Lordship. It is not the marriage matter nor the hatred some bear to my Lady Lennox, my wife, or to me, that makes this great ado and occupies heads with so many devices. It is a greater matter; which I leave to conjecture, not doubting but your Lordship's wisdom hath foreseen it, and thereof had due consideration, as always you have been most careful for it. I have no more to trouble your Lordship withal, but that I would not have her Majesty think, if I could see any cause to imagine any intent of liking or insinuation with this Queen the rather to grow by this marriage, or any other inconvenience might come thereby to her Majesty, that I could or would bear with it, or hide it from her Majesty, for that Lady's sake, or for my wife or any other cause else; for besides the faith I bear her Majesty, with a singular love I look not by any means but by her Majesty only to be made better than I am; nor by any change to hold that I have. So take my leave of your Lordship.

"Sheffield Castle (where my charge is safe), the 27th of December, 1574. Your Lordship's assured servant to my power,

"G. SHREWSBURY."

Dignified as the letter is, it shows the sense of injury under which the Earl was smarting, as well, indeed, he might. Elizabeth recognized in him a faithful servant, proved by the unbetrayed trust of many years, and by the reports of the numerous spies she had set about

him. She knew that he had diligently obeyed her orders, though worn out by her exigent demands, he had sometimes wearily begged to be relieved of his trust; and that he had expended large sums from his private purse in her service.

She must have known that he could be spending no very agreeable festival burdened with a prisoner he dared not leave, fearing that disgrace hovered over his house, helpless to aid his imprisoned wife, to whom—at least at that period—he was deeply attached. Yet no consideration for his feelings hindered Elizabeth in the course that temper and a wounded *amour-propre*, quite as much as wisdom, dictated to her. Marriage at any time was sin to be glanced at askance, but marriage without the Queen's leave was a crime, savouring withal in this case of treason.

So Elizabeth stormed, and a long official inquiry was opened under the presidency of the Earl of Huntingdon, a man obnoxious alike to Mary of Scotland and the Earl of Shrewsbury. Eventually, however, the Countesses of Lennox and of Shrewsbury were acquitted, at any rate of "large treasons," and retired to their respective residences, while the royal countenance still continued to frown upon them.

So Charles Stuart and his poor little wife passed the first year of their wedded life in gloom, in fear, and in poverty, for the House of Lennox at that time was ill dowered with money. They lived probably at their house in Hackney for some months, the way to the bride's northern home being long and the journey expensive. The younger Lady Lennox seems to have been a delicate, meek-spirited girl, ever fearful of giving offence, and surely presented a curious contrast to her self-willed, imperious, high-spirited mother.

She seems to have been on good terms with her mother-in-law, who, together with the Countess of Shrewsbury, was waiting with the deepest anxiety the child who was to carry on the fortunes of the House of Lennox, and whose advent was now close at hand.

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LADY ARABELLA STUART.

(From an engraving in the Hope Collection.)

CHAPTER II

SOME considerable doubt seems to have existed in the minds of older chroniclers as to the date of Arabella's birth. Lodge speaks of it as having taken place "about the year 1578." The question, however, is settled by a dated letter of the Countess of Shrewsbury, in which she speaks of her grandchild as "now upon seven years." This fixes the date of her birth, 1575, and the event took place at Chatsworth. The child's name has many variants. She herself almost always wrote "Ar-bella." The Queen of Scotland wrote of her as "Ar-belle." Her grandmother and Lord Burghley as "Ar-bell" or "Ar-bella." Only in some few of the letters of her day, and those not usually written by her relatives, do I find the present form—"Arabella"—used. It was, then, by the name "Arbella" she was more generally known to her contemporaries. For god-parents she had Mary and Gilbert Talbot and Charles Cavendish.

To the elder Countess of Lennox the fact that a girl was born instead of a boy would be a disappointment. True, for a moment the birth of a girl rendered life easier, as the Queen of England, having dreaded the advent of a boy, who would be certain eventually to be used against her, regarded the arrival of Arabella in a fairly lenient spirit.

James the Sixth of Scotland had the greatest right of any claimant to the English throne; but after him,

should he die unmarried or without heirs, stood the newly born Arabella's father, Charles Stuart. The latter was a delicate youth of twenty at the time, already showing signs of the disease, consumption, which was to prove fatal to him a year or so later. Thus, Elizabeth, probably marked him "safe," and dismissed him from her calculations. James the Sixth was a boy of nine in the year 1575, king of a country so poor that its rulers were glad to accept occasionally money from another sovereign's hands, and Elizabeth, moreover, possessed within her own kingdom a hostage for James' good behaviour—Mary of Scotland. So James might be put on one side as not actually dangerous to the throne. Besides, by birth and education he was a Scotchman, and the English hated and despised his nation, and were by no means inclined to see the two kingdoms united.

Twenty-eight years later, at Elizabeth's death, a murmur arose in England, that in spite of James' undeniably better claim, Arabella should take his place as she was English born and bred. But there were many who, in spite of Elizabeth's example, disbelieved that a woman could be a satisfactory ruler, so the murmur died away, and James was permitted to ascend the throne. But had Arabella been a boy, and one who had inherited the spirit and ambition of the Tudors, James might never have reigned as King of England. Elizabeth did well to look upon the birth of a girl to the House of Lennox as a special mercy and give thanks accordingly.

But the Dowager Countess of Lennox had less cause for congratulation. She saw that her son could not live long; she knew that they were not wealthy; what money they had came from the Lennox possessions

and, should her son die, would lapse with the title to James of Scotland. It was doubtful—as time went on it became certain—that James would not be permitted to revive the Earldom of Lennox for Arabella, and the Countess doubtless guessed that, deprived of her son, comparative penury would remain for herself and her grandchild. They had, of course, a claim on their cousin Queen Elizabeth, but between the sum that Elizabeth's generosity would permit her to allow them and that which would maintain them comfortably there would undoubtedly be a gulf. It was well for Arabella that the wealthy Countess of Shrewsbury, even if a grandson would have pleased her more, could yet receive a granddaughter with joy—as an asset that increased her importance, a pawn in the great game she had promised herself to play.

Mary of Scotland, too, greeted joyfully the advent of the child who was to prove an amusement and a solace to her, and whenever possible exerted herself in her favour. Arabella stood in a difficult relationship to the Queen of Scots; rarely surely has any girl been in the extraordinary position of step-grandchild to the gaoler of her cousin and aunt by marriage!

The storms and difficulties that had attended Elizabeth Cavendish's marriage died down on the entry of Arabella into the world, and for a while she tasted happiness. But for such a little while! In 1576, barely a year after Arabella's birth, Charles Stuart died in his house at Hackney, aged twenty-one. What the Dowager Countess of Lennox had foreseen came to pass. The Regent of Scotland on behalf of the King claimed the Lennox lands and Earldom. But Arabella's relatives were not likely to stand on one side and see her beggared.

Presently we find the Dowager Countess of Lennox appealing to her Majesty, and petitioning her to deal with the Regent of Scotland to know :—

1st. How the dower can be avoided by their laws.

2nd. How the Regent can disinherit the daughter of Charles Stuart.

3rd. If he will not permit the dower to be answered.

4th. If he will delay the admittance of Lady Arabella as heir to her father, then to demand that Lady Margaret have the right of the land of the Lennox during the King's minority in the right of wardship for her son's child, etc., and her wages.[1]

The Queen appeared at first to lend a gracious ear to the suit of Arabella's friends regarding her inheritance.

"The Queen finds it very strange that any disposition should be intended of the Earldom to the prejudice of the only daughter of the late Earl of Lennox."[2]

She directed letters to be sent to the Regent to that effect. She also made a formal "request" on Arabella's behalf stating that whereas gift of the Earldom of Lennox was made to Charles Stuart and his heirs, the Lady Arabella ought to be admitted as heir to the Earldom.[3] The Regent's answer, however, was unsatisfactory. He insisted that on the death of the Earl of Lennox the Earldom fell into the King's hands, as the Lady Arabella was a ward.

Much correspondence ensued on the subject, and then the situation was complicated by the death of the Dowager Countess of Lennox in 1578, aged sixty-eight. Life had been but a weary business for her since the

[1] Harley MSS., 289, 202. Harley MSS., 289, from pp. 198-202, contains papers referring to the Lennox suit.

[2] Harley MSS., 289 and 198. [3] Harley MSS., 289 and 202.

death of her beloved son, and she slipped quietly, thankfully even, into her grave, leaving in her will (which was granted probate in 1578) what little she died possessed of to Arabella.

The date of Lady Margaret's death is given variously, but is fixed by a letter from the Queen of Scotland, written from Sheffield and dated May 2nd, 1578. In it she says that the Countess of Lennox died "a month since," and that Queen Elizabeth had signified her intention to take the little Arabella under her protection.

This "protection" was eventually to take the form of a small allowance, some not very valuable "tokens," various prohibitions as to marriage, and finally imprisonment. It is doubtful—however much it honoured her—if it conduced to Arabella's happiness.

But at the time of Lady Margaret's death strenuous efforts were still being made by the Shrewsburys on behalf of Arabella to secure for her the Lennox inheritance. Such friends as were most likely to influence the Queen to obtain the desired boon from the King of Scotland were written to again and again.

In 1578 Elizabeth Lennox wrote to Lord Burghley:—

"I can but yield unto your Lordship most hearty thanks for your continual goodness towards me and my little one, and specially for your Lordship's late good dealing with the Scot's Ambassador for my poor child's right; for which, as also sundry otherwise we are for ever bound to your Lordship whom I beseech still to further that cause as to your Lordship may seem best.

"I can assure your Lordship that the Earldom of Lennox was granted by Act of Parliament to my Lord my late husband and the heirs of his body, so that they should offer great wrong in seeking to take it from Arbella, which I trust by your Lordship's good

means will be prevented, being of your mere goodness for justice' sake so well disposed thereto. For all which your Lordship's goodness as I am bound I rest in heart more thankful than I can any way express.

"I take my leave of your Lordship, whom I pray God long to preserve.

"At Newgate Street; the fifteenth August. 1578.

"Your Lordship's,

"As I am bound,

"E. LENNOX."[1]

The style of this letter is rather reminiscent of that of the Countess of Shrewsbury, who doubtless suggested it. Ten days later the Earl of Leicester was written to in a similar strain.

"Your Lordship's most honourable and earnest dealings of late in the just cause of my poor infant for the Earldom of Lennox declareth plainly your noble mind and disposition as well to support the distressed (otherwise utterly unable to maintain their right), and also your most apparent friendship towards them to whom your Lordship professeth the same, whereby I and my friends, above all others, do in heart honour your Lordship as by whom we think ourselves chiefly assisted in all our causes, which for my part, I can but acknowledge and with most thankful mind wish your Lordship all happiness, by whose only goodness I assure myself of a good end of that cause, and so praying for your Lordship's health and prosperity long to continue, take my leave at Newgate Street this 25th of April. 1578.

"Your Lordship's most bounded

"E. LENNOX.

"My Lord, my mother hearing of the infection at Chelsea, whereof, although there was no great danger,

[1] *Ellis' Letters.*

yet her fear was such, as having not any fit house that for necessity I must presently come hither by her commandment which I have obeyed."

The little explanatory postscript seems to take from the stiff formality of the note, and give us a glimpse of the girlish writer.

But the mediation of my Lords Burghley and Leicester did not prove effectual. Elizabeth's attitude in the matter had by that time changed.

Lady Margaret had, indeed, left behind her more debts than money, and Elizabeth asserted that she herself had been forced to pay the funeral expenses to the intent that the sale of Lady Margaret's goods might serve to pay her debts.

Naturally the Scottish Ambassador continued to press his suit. He averred that the King of Scotland was desirous that the land and possessions in England which had been granted to Matthew and Margaret, his grandfather and grandmother, and which he deemed "his ancient patrimony in England," might be put into his hands as the next heir. James' advisers knew that the revenues of the kingdom of Scotland were generally diminished, and that the King required money to provide for his household and to help him in maintaining the dignity his position demanded. However, Elizabeth proved obdurate. She refused to consider him as heir to the inheritance, and yet at the same time she declined to name any other. Camden says:—

"And yet she (Elizabeth) would not give ear to those who affirmed, that the Lady Arbella, daughter to Charles the King's uncle, and born in England was next heir to the lands in England. Neither yet would

she hear the Ambassador who showed out of former histories that the kings of Scotland born in Scotland, had in ancient times succeeded without any controversy, by hereditary right to lands in England, in the County of Huntingdon, and earnestly besought her, that she would not deny a prince her nearest kinsman, the privilege of citizens, which she had often granted to strangers and foreigners. But she commanded the rents of those lands to be sequestered by the Lord Burghley, Master of the Wards, and signified to the Ambassador that the King should satisfy his grandmother's creditors out of the Earl of Lennox his lands in Scotland. For she took it not well that the King after the death of Charles his uncle, had revoked the infeoffment of the Earldom of Lennox made to his uncle and his heirs and that to the prejudice as was suggested of the Lady Arbella, though by the privilege of the Scots it was still lawful to them to revoke all such grants and donations as were prejudicial to the Realm."[1]

The gift of the Earldom of Lennox had been made by the Earl of Mar when Regent, and it was perfectly legal for the King to revoke it. The matter, however, after dragging on for a long time ended in little satisfaction to either party so far as the lands were concerned; but James insisted on his right to bestow the title where he pleased, by creating Esmé Stuart Earl of Lennox.

All that Arabella Stuart inherited from her grandmother was a casket of jewels, a quaint list of which still remains.

"April, 1590. My Lady Margaret's Grace committed hir Casket with jueles unto the handes of Mr.

[1] Camden, *Annals of Elizabeth.*

Thomas Fowler to be delivered to the Lady Arbella at th'adge of 14 :—[1]

(1) A juell sett with a fayre table diamant a table ruby and a Emerod with a fayre great pearle.
(2) A crose all set with fayre table diamants with a squar linked cheane.
(3) A juell sett with a ballast and a fayre table diamant sett beneth it.
(4) An H. of gould sett with rock ruby.
(5) A Burrish sett with a fayre diamant.
(6) A Rosse sett with fayre diamantes.
(7) A Caskanet sett with table diamantes.
(8) A girdle sett w[t] table diamantes.
(9) A border sett with table diamantes.
(10) A border sett with table rubyes.
(11) A border sett with rock Emerods.
(12) A sable the head of gould sett w diamantes.
(13) A chean sett with rock rubyes pitt wyse.
(15) A chean of small turkeys sett upon the thre squar piller.
(16) A clock sett in cristall with a woulf of gould upon it.
(17) Buttons of rock rubyes to sett a goune.
(18) Table diamantes to sett upon sleves.
(19) Too tabletes of gould th'on with too agettes with divers small tuquese the other inalmaled.
(20) The form of a globe.
(21) Braslates too payre on of agget the other of playne gould.

with other thinges that be not yet in memory."

It is probable that the jewels in their entirety never reached Arabella. Certain of them, however, she is known to have possessed. Fowler, in whose care they were,[2] died suddenly while in Scotland, and the jewels

[1] Cooper.
[2] State Papers. Record Office. Vol. 231, fol. 90.

fell into the King's hands, who desired to retain them. When Arabella was fourteen, Lord Burghley wrote on her behalf to demand the jewels. On June 4th, 1590, Robert Bowes answered as follows:—

"Sundry times I have moved the King that the jewels late in the hands of Thomas Fowler deceased, and appertaining to the La. Arbell, might be restored to her. Nevertheless I am still deferred, that upon the sight of the Lady Margaret's will the King will take order in all these things."[1]

A few days later he again wrote to Burghley:—

"I have again, and with some earnestness, sought that the jewels, late in the hand of Mr. Fowler deceased, and appertaining to the Lady Arbella . . . might be restored. But the King hath answered yesterday, that he doth not only retain them in recompense of such legacies as the Lady Margaret Douglas bequeathed to him; and left in Mr. Fowler's custody to be delivered to him and whereof he is not hitherto satisfied by any part; but also that these jewels and pearls being the goods of Thomas Fowler, appertain to the King, for that he died intestate and was a stranger here. He agreed to submit the matter to the Council."[1]

Between James' demands for satisfaction of his claims to her grandmother's estate, and Elizabeth's declaration that the Dowager Countess had left scarcely enough to pay her debts and nothing for funeral expenses, Arabella seemed likely to obtain little.

For some time the unhappy Scotch Queen had been contriving what benefits she could for the Lennox family. In February, 1577, while she was at Sheffield Castle, Mary determined to make her will. A draft written of it has been preserved; she commanded the

[1] Cooper.

Scottish crown to be given to Charles, Earl of Lennox, if her son James should predecease him.[1] As we have seen, the Earl was already dead at that date, but the news had not reached the Queen of Scots in her captivity. Later, in another will, Mary wrote, "Je faitz don à Arbelle, ma nièce du compté de Lennox, tenu par feu son père, et commande à mon fitz comme mon héritier et successeur d'obéyr en cest endroit à ma volontés."[1]

Also, on September 19th, 1579, Mary executed a warrant urging the executor of the late Dowager Countess of Lennox to place such jewels as had been left to Arabella in the custody of the Countess of Shrewsbury. The warrant ran as follows :—

"To all people be it known that we Marie by the grace of God Queen of Scotland, Dowager of France, do will and require Thomas Fowler sole executor to our dearest mother-in-law and aunt, the Lady Margaret Countess of Lennox deceased, to deliver into the hands and custody of our right well-beloved cousin Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury all and every such jewels, as the Lady Margaret before her death delivered and committed in charge to the said Thomas Fowler for the use of the Lady Arbelle Stuart her grandchild if God send her life till fourteen years of age; if not then, for the use of our dear and only son the prince of Scotland. In witness that this is our will and desire to the said Fowler we have given the present under our own hand at Sheffield Mansion, the 19th. of September, the year of our Lord M.D. threescore and nineteenth of our reign the thirty-sixth."[1]

It was at Sheffield Castle that the next great tragedy in Arabella's life was enacted. There in 1581–2 death

[1] Labanoff.

claimed Elizabeth Lennox, and her child was left to the guardianship of her grandmother.

Arabella would be between six and seven years of age, old enough to mourn for the girl-mother, and to realize something, at any rate, of her loss. The Countess of Shrewsbury was ill with grief, and to her husband fell the task of announcing the event to the Court.

"My very good Lords,

"It hath pleased God to call to His mercy out of this transitory world my daughter Lennox, this present Sunday, being the 21st. of January, about three of the clock in the morning. Both towards God and the world she made a most godly and good end, and was in most perfect memory all the time of her sickness even to the last hour. Sundry times did she make her most earnest and humble prayer to the Almighty for her Majesty's most happy estate and the long and prosperous continuance thereof, and as one most infinitely bound to her Highness, humbly and lowly beseeched her Majesty to have pity upon her poor orphan Arbella Stuart, and as at all times heretofore both the Mother and poor daughter were most infinitly bound to her Highness so her assured trust was that her Majesty would continue the same accustomed goodness and bounty to the poor child she left, and of this her suit and humble petition my said daughter Lennox by her last will and testament, requireth both your Lordships, to whom she found and acknowledged herself always most bound in her name, most lowly to make this humble petition to her Majesty and to present with all humility unto her Majesty a poor remembrance — delivered by my daughter's own hands—which very shortly will be sent, with my daughter's most humble prayer for her Highness' most happy estate, and most lowly beseeching her Highness in such sort to accept thereof as it

pleased the Almighty to receive the poor widow's mite. My wife taketh my daughter Lennox's death so grievously that she neither doth nor can think of anything but lamenting and weeping. I thought it my part to signify to both your Lordships in what sort God hath called her to His mercy, which I beseech you make known to her Majesty and thus with my very hearty commendations to both your good Lordships I cease.

"Sheffield Manor, this 21st. January 1581-2.

"Your Lordships' assured

"G. SHREWSBURY.

"To Lord Burghley and Lord Leicester."[1]

Certainly tragedy had bulked largely in Arabella's first years, indeed, throughout her life, few passed her by untouched by sorrow or by menace. Henceforth her youth was to be passed with the Shrewsburys, living where they lived, sharing their pleasures and their cares.

Until the year 1584, when he was at last relieved of the charge of Mary of Scotland, the Earl passed his time in attendance on her, changing her place of captivity as his prudence or the state of her health dictated; only with the greatest difficulty obtaining from Elizabeth a few days' leave of absence.

The task was a hard one, and one moreover that—save for the honour—carried little benefit. Both Queens, his mistress and his prisoner, accused him by their suspicions, harassed him by their fears. He was already past his prime, and for some years his family life had not been happy. His eldest son, Gilbert, was extravagant, and continually pestered his father for money, which the Earl, whose fortune had been im-

[1] *Ellis' Letters.*

poverished in the Queen's service, was ill able to give him.

Moreover, Gilbert was ruled by his wife Mary, who had inherited all the Countess' worst characteristics. It was natural that she should side with her mother in any family dispute, but that her husband should range himself with his stepmother must have been a bitter grief to his father.

In the year of Arabella's birth the first dissensions between the Earl and his wife began to show themselves, and as time went on to deepen into bitter quarrels. It is not necessary here to discuss them fully, only to know that they were many and serious. The Earl was miserable, and his misery affected his temper; the Countess—well, her temper had always been easily affected, and the pleasure of a family turmoil doubtless prevented her from falling into the same melancholy state. Everything and everybody contributed their quota to the strife, until it developed into public warfare, an open scandal that, in 1584, was referred to Elizabeth for settlement. The Queen did her best and evidently was sincere in her wish to render the Earl's life happier if she could. Eventually, however, she must have been obliged to confess that she had failed. For the Earl could not forget the passions and accusations of his wife, and sought only peace for his last years, which he decided could but be obtained away from his wife's side. Before the Queen's mediation the atmosphere of their house was one of perpetual storm, disagreeable even to Gilbert and Mary Talbot, who took so prominent a part in the fray. How must it have seemed to the little girl who lived with them? Yet it does not appear to have disturbed her happiness, if one may judge from a fragment of a

letter written by her steward to the Countess of Shrewsbury from Wingfield.

"My Lady Arbella at eight of ye clock this night was merry and eat her meat well, but she went not to school these six days, therefor I would be glad of your La. coming if there were no other matter but it."[1] The unfortunate writer was either not the right man to cope with her, or Arabella showed a pretty gift for ruling.

No very detailed account remains now to tell us what education Arabella received. The information given about her by later chroniclers is amusing in its diversity of opinion as to her talents. On the one hand, she is dismissed as a mediocrity, a person of no worth—one rather wonders on what grounds—on the other, she is extolled as an intellectual marvel. There is no doubt she was highly educated. The Countess was no fool, and hoping as she did to one day make her grandchild a queen, she would not be slow to foster any abilities that could aid Arabella in her exalted position. It was, besides, the age of learned women. Arabella's cousin, the Queen of England, prided herself on her erudition; and her aunt, the Queen of Scotland, was highly accomplished. Arabella, in the early part of her life, came much under the influence of the latter. Possibly it was from her that she learnt to write and speak French so fluently and easily. Mary during the long years of her imprisonment developed a passion for needlework; much of her work still remains. Arabella must often have sat and watched the deft mingling of colours and the gradual completion of the design by her aunt's skilful hands.

Poor little Arabella, sitting fascinated while her aunt worked, and Mary, seeking what distraction she could

[1] Hunter's, *Hallamshire*.

to ease her troubles; of what were they thinking? Was Arabella feeling vaguely sorry in her childish way for this woman who could so rarely pass beyond the castle gate?

Mary, perhaps, was planning Arabella's future, weaving pretty little romances for her, strange contrast to her own life.

Yet the child, years after the woman's sorrows had ended, was destined to be and to do as Mary then. Destined to work with her needle, making little gifts of "handwork" to send from her prison to any who might be moved to pity by the sight of them, and so help her with entreaties. Destined to work—as Mary had worked—to ease her troubles, to pray, to hope, to plot, even as Mary had done, for liberty. To live a prisoner, crying out bitterly, as Mary had cried, against her fate—a fate more cruel in that it was less deserved than the unhappy Queen's—until her troubles were engulfed by the dark hours of insanity, and death at last released her.

Later on Arabella added Italian, Spanish, and Latin to her other studies; she danced well, and was musical. While under the care of her grandmother she was provided with a tutor from the University to read to her, and from her letters, which, by the way, are better spelt and more clearly written than those of many of her contemporaries, one gathers that she had profited by her opportunities and possessed a cultivated and refined mind. She was merry and laughter-loving, sweet-tempered too, which, in view of the passions that raged in the Shrewsbury household, seemed a desirable necessity. At any rate, the child flourished and passed a merry childhood, which even the wrathful gloom of the Earl could not disturb. Possibly much

of that unfortunate man's unhappiness resulted from troubled brooding, which he was unable, owing to his precious charge, to alleviate by any pleasant change of occupation.

But the necessity of guarding and training her "jewel," as she usually called Arabella—and from glimpses in her letters the training seemed needed—and the supervision of her numerous building operations, probably sufficed to keep the Countess sufficiently interested. Throughout her long life the building, rebuilding, or alteration of houses appears to have been a mania with her. But of all her numerous homes, Hardwick and Chatsworth were her favourites, and between those two Arabella probably passed most of her time. Whatever her faults, Elizabeth Shrewsbury was fond of her children, and though her quick, imperious temper was scarcely likely to make her a patient mother, she was, at any rate in the earlier part of her life, a loving one. She appears, too, to have been fairly successful as a stepmother, even after the quarrels that arose between her and her step-children's father. So it was but natural that she adored and petted her little orphaned grandchild.

To return, however, to the months immediately following on the death of Arabella's mother. As soon as the Countess of Shrewsbury could rouse herself from her grief, she set about procuring from Queen Elizabeth a certain income for her grandchild. To this end she wrote the following long epistle to Lord Burghley:—

"After my very hearty commendations to your good Lo. when it pleased the Queen's Majesty, my most gracious sovereign, upon my humble suit to grant unto my late daughter Lennox the sum of four hundred pounds, and to that her dear and only daughter two

hundred pounds yearly for their better maintenance assigned out of part of the lands of her inheritance; whereof the four hundred pounds is now at her Majesty's disposition by the death of my daughter Lennox, whom it pleased God (I doubt not in mercy for her good, but to my no small grief) in her best time to take out of this world, whom I cannot yet remember but with a sorrowful and troubled mind, I am now, my good Lord, to be an humble suitor to the Queen's Majesty that it may please her to confirm that grant of the whole six hundred pounds yearly for the education of my dearest jewel Arabella, wherein I most assuredly trust to her Majesty's most gracious goodness, who never denied me any suit, but by her most gracious and bountiful favours everyway hath so much bound me as I can never think myself able to discharge my duty in all faithful service to her Majesty. I wish not to leave after I shall willingly fail in any part thereof to the best of my power. And as I know your L. hath special care for the ordering of her Majesty's revenues and of her estate everyway, so I trust you will consider of the poor infant's case, who under her Majesty is to appeal only unto your Lo. for succour in all her distresses; who, I trust cannot dislike of this my suit on her behalf, considering the charges incident to her bringing up. For although she were ever where her mother was during her life, yet can I not now like she should be here nor in any place else where I may not sometimes see her and daily hear of her, and therefore charged with keeping house where she must be with such as is fit for her standing, of whom I have special care, not only such as a natural mother hath of her best beloved child, but much more greater in respect of how she is in blood to her Majesty: albeit one of the poorest as depending wholly on her Majesty's gracious bounty and goodness, and being now upon seven years, and very apt to learn and able to conceive what shall be taught her. The

charge will so increase as I doubt not her Majesty will well conceive the six hundred pounds yearly to be little enough, which as your Lod. knoweth is but so much in money, for that the lands be in lease, and no further commodity to be looked for during these few years of the child's minority. All which I trust your L. will consider and say to her Majesty what you think thereof; and so most heartily wish your L. well to do.

"Sheffield, this 8th. day of May,

"Your L. most assured loving friend.

"E. SHREWSBURY.

"To the Right Honourable and my very good Lord, the Lord Burghley, L. Treasurer of England."

To this letter is added a quaint postscript by her grandchild.

"Je prieray Dieu Monsr: vous donner en parfaicte, en entière santé, tout heureux et bon success, et seray tousjours preste à vous faire tout honneur et service.

"ARBELLA STEWARD."[1]

It is impossible to help smiling at the Countess; her ways were indeed subtle. To ask for a sum of money, yet at the same time to make it plain that, through no fault of her own, it would not be the last demand she would have to make and to emphasize the blood-royal of her grandchild, was no mean diplomacy. Certainly the Countess had a firm belief in the brilliant destiny of Arabella; and to this end she took a pleasure in marking out a different upbringing for her than that given to her own children. She was guarded with the utmost care and treated with a degree of ceremony that only befitted one of royal rank.

But the Shrewsburys were not to find the guardian-

[1] Ellis.

ship of their grandchild an easy task. Elizabeth, Queen of England, and Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, took entirely different views of the situation. To the one Arabella's birth had been a calamity, to the other a matter for rejoicing. The one was bent on keeping the child in the background as much as possible, the other on bringing her forward. They were alike only in one thing. Both women, Queen and subject, intended Arabella's destiny to be of their fashioning; but one worked for a future that should dazzle by its brilliancy, the other used her power to tint that future with some sombre, harmless neutral. With two women so alike in temperament as were Queen and Countess, both spirited, wilful, fiery and domineering, both bent on using the same tool to serve their widely differing purpose, there was little probability of peace. One cannot help feeling sorry for the poor Earl standing between two such women, commanded by both.

The birth of Arabella had not made the Countess' position any easier. It was absolutely necessary that she should be on friendly terms with the child's aunt, Mary of Scotland, at any rate for some time. Should Mary ever succeed Elizabeth, and though not probable it was at least possible, the rewards of the Shrewsburys would be measured by their behaviour to her during her captivity. In any case, even in her prison, she exercised a certain power, and it would not be wise for Arabella's sake to overlook it. So for the time being she was in constant endeavour to improve her relations with the captive. On the other hand, there stood Elizabeth employing a whole army of spies, ever seeking to justify her suspicions. At all costs, she was to be soothed and her easily stirred jealousy unprovoked. Many were the costly gifts offered by the

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ELIZABETH, COUNTESS OF SHREWSBURY.

(From an engraving in the Hope Collection.)

Countess of Shrewsbury, and later by Arabella, to placate this domineering Queen.

Chance, however, showed the Countess a certain road to Elizabeth's favour. In the summer of 1576 the Earl of Leicester felt indisposed. The Queen was alarmed, and willingly assented to his doctor's proposal, that he should go for a cure to Buxton, famous even then for the curative properties of its waters.

Now the Earl of Leicester was just then at the height of his popularity with the Queen, and had already shown himself an obliging friend to the Shrewsburys. A little later, as we have seen, he was to undertake to advance the young Countess of Lennox's petition on behalf of her daughter with the Queen; it was natural that the Shrewsburys should take the opportunity of doing him a service.

So the Countess bustled away to Chatsworth to prepare a mighty entertainment, and her stepson Gilbert Talbot was sent to Buxton to act as proxy for his father—who dared not leave his captive—in entertaining the Earl of Leicester there.

Both visits passed off successfully, and so pleased was Queen Elizabeth at the reception of her favourite, that she wrote herself to thank them for it.

One cannot help wishing that some record of the conversation that passed between Leicester and the Countess had remained. Was it some word spoken during this visit that stayed firmly in the Countess' mind and later aided the formation of one of her matrimonial schemes for Arabella?

We cannot tell now, but that the scheme did occur to the Countess, and was hotly pursued for a time we shall see later.

CHAPTER III

IT is outside the scope of this book to dwell on the growing strife between the Earl and his Countess, which led to their separation for a time, and was only closed by the death of the Earl in 1591. It is to be hoped that the sordid business was kept as much as possible from Arabella. And, indeed, she seems to have passed a pleasant, careless childhood, the plaything of the family.

From the first, Gilbert Talbot and his wife Mary made a great pet of the child. Numerous were the little messages they sent her through their parents.

Later, some of Arabella's most charming letters were addressed to Gilbert, of whom, by the way, she felt no awe, and throughout her life she clung to her aunt Mary Talbot.

It must be confessed that Arabella was not fortunate in the atmosphere which surrounded her childhood or in the relatives who brought her up.

Chiefly, of course, this duty rested with her grandmother. That imperious widow had found life impossible without warfare, and was soon engaged in a battle with first one and then another of her numerous relatives. Chief among her enemies she now reckoned Gilbert, who had upheld her behaviour to his father, and whom she was wont to claim fondly as "her son."[1] Gilbert also was in conflict with his family, and most of all with his brother Edward Talbot, whom he

[1] Craig.

particularly disliked; indeed, later, he was, though quite without reason, suspected of an attempt to poison Edward by means of a pair of perfumed gloves; the story gained credence from the known hatred between the brothers. Arabella, often in the charge of Gilbert and Mary, played at peacemaker between them and the old Dowager, until as she grew older she found herself involved in differences with the latter, and forced to make her own peace.

Gilbert, whom Izaak Walton celebrates[1] as "the great and glorious Earl of Shrewsbury" from the splendid extravagance of his life, appears to have been a kindly, good-tempered, rather indolent man, greatly ruled by his wife, and apparently without the ability of his father. At any rate, he was destined to play no very important part in history. Indeed, he never enjoyed public office under Elizabeth save once, when he was sent to France in 1596 as special Ambassador to receive the oath of Henry the Fourth to the treaty made between France and England, and to introduce the Ambassador-in-Ordinary, Sir Anthony Mildmay. He was made a Knight of the Garter in 1592, and was appointed by James to be Guardian and Chief Justice of all the forests beyond the Trent. He and Mary had four children, a son, George, who died in childhood, and three daughters; Mary, who married William, Earl of Pembroke; Elizabeth, who married Henry, Earl of Kent; and Alethea, who married Thomas, Earl of Arundel. Mary his wife had inherited all her mother's ambition and her passionate temper without the firmness and balance which remedied many defects in the old Countess. The latter might give way to violent outbursts, but she was clear-sighted, prompt in judg-

[1] Quoted from Craig.

ment, and a capable business woman, controlling and managing her vast affairs with great ability. Mary, however, though she inherited to a certain degree her mother's business capabilities, was a woman of impulse, unable to see where her impulse might lead her; daring, too; and her temper, as passionate as the older woman's, was allied to violent attacks of hysteria. It was no wonder if Arabella as she grew older lacked self-control, though happily she lacked also the evil temper, and gave rein to caprices which did her lasting injury. Neither her aunt nor grandmother had done anything, certainly not by their example, to help her to gain any self-restraint. All her life, too, she was easily swayed; and in spite of moments of the deepest melancholy, she was always eager, far too eager, to look on the brightest side of every picture presented to her, when a little reflection would have shown that the brightness was only a dazzling impossibility.

The very pride and love the Dowager Countess felt for her was a misfortune; for Elizabeth Shrewsbury knew no better way of expressing that pride and love than by a thousand ambitious schemes. If possible, her grandchild, her beloved Arabella, must be a Queen. So to that end tended, all the first few years of her life, her grandmother's instructions. That was the Dowager's first step. None knew better than she the temper of England's Queen. Yet she deliberately ran counter to it, forced Arabella forward as a probable next heir—and the very word was obnoxious to Elizabeth—with the natural result that she aroused all Elizabeth's dislike and suspicions, and focussed on Arabella the attention of every malcontent in the kingdom.

Moreover, the younger Countess of Shrewsbury's affection for the Roman Catholic religion was well known; her aunt would naturally possess much influence over the child, she was young, pliant, it might be possible . . . So a hope was born and throve apace in the hearts of the Catholics of the kingdom. True, so far, Arabella had been most strictly educated in the Protestant religion, the Dowager Countess had seen to that. She knew how fatal it would be in Elizabeth's eyes for Arabella to change her faith; and so Elizabeth Shrewsbury—not herself a deeply religious woman—professed an ardent and becoming anxiety that Arabella should remain untainted by any suspicion even of heresy.

The multiplicity of suitors for Arabella's hand was very great, and as varied as for the Queen of England herself. Unfortunately, very few details remain of the majority, often the only trace of them exists in a vague reference in the State papers. Many of these suggested alliances, it may safely be assumed, were mere political ruses, plans to alarm Elizabeth and her Councillors, to wring from them some greater concession, or urge them to some fresh desirable move. Certainly Elizabeth occasionally dangled Arabella as a matrimonial prize, as she had dangled herself, with as much intention of fulfilment. Many years later an action of hers in this respect became known.

". . . her (Elizabeth's) second and not less remarkable action now comes to light, for at the very height of the Spanish preparations against England in 1588, she of her own initiative despatched into Flanders Robert Cecil, a little hunchback, and then in private life, but very wise; and he in simple traveller's garb, but with credentials from her, whispered in the ear of Alexander

Farnese that the Queen would give Arabella as wife to his son Ranuccio (Duke of Parma) and with her the succession to the throne."

The writer concludes by remarking "the whole world has seen the result of that step."[1]

For the moment Elizabeth achieved her object, and Arabella remained unmated.

A little later James of Scotland was to suggest another alliance for Arabella, possibly as a sop to any conscientious scruples he may have possessed with regard to his bestowal of the Earldom of Lennox. This, as I have mentioned, James had given to Esmé Stuart, a not far distant kinsman of his own, and head of that branch of the family that had settled in France and become known as "Lords of Aubigny."

Esmé was born about 1542, and succeeded his father at Aubigny in 1567. He left France for Scotland in 1579, at the command of James, then a boy of nearly fourteen. It has always been stated that James desired to arrange a marriage between this Esmé Stuart and Arabella. Miss Cooper says that James made "a present of the inheritance to his favourite and cousin Esmé Stuart, Lord d'Aubigny, proposing, however, to compromise matters by marrying Arabella *to the new possessor.*" Mr. Bradley, whose life of Arabella superseded Miss Cooper's, gives a similar account. "The Scotch king granted both title and lands June 16th, 1578, to Robert, Earl of Caithness, uncle to Charles Stuart, who resigned it in 1581 to James' relative and favourite Esmé Stuart, Lord d'Aubigny. At the same time, however, and as if to atone for his robbery, James suggested that Arabella's claims should be settled and compromised by her marriage with Esmé—a proposal

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

renewed some years later, but again indignantly refused by Elizabeth."

Now as Esmé Stuart had married, in 1572, before leaving France, a distant relative, Katherine de Balsac, who moreover was to live at Aubigny for *nearly fifty years after* Esmé's death in 1583, this can scarcely have been the bridegroom proposed for Arabella. It is much more probable that James suggested Esmé's second son, born about 1579, who was named after his father, whence probably the confusion has arisen. If that was so, it was not surprising that the Shrewsbury family did not greatly desire the match, as there was no reason for supposing that the second son would inherit, as he eventually did in 1634, the lands and title of Lennox.

In Arabella's early childhood the Dowager Countess of Shrewsbury cherished a scheme for uniting her granddaughter to the little King of Scotland. Mary speaks of this in one of her letters to Mauvissière: "but she (Elizabeth Shrewsbury) laid her account nevertheless with being the first in my good graces, and even that my son should marry my niece Arabella";[1] but what he thought of the scheme does not appear. Later, from another letter of Mary's[2] one gathers that the Dowager Countess had entirely changed her tactics. The Queen complains that her hostess-gaoler is alienated from her because she was determined that "this crown should pass to Arabella." Now by "this crown" Mary meant that of England, to which she considered herself entitled; and she would naturally regard as unfavourable to herself any act which should bring forward another claimant.

[1] Labanoff, vol. vi.
[2] Labanoff.

Very evidently, then, the Countess of Shrewsbury had abandoned her intention of obtaining the Scottish throne for Arabella, and had focussed her ambition upon the English one. But how to fulfil it?

My Lord of Leicester had been a good friend of hers, and a well-fêted one. This friendliness was to bear fruit. In 1577 Leicester contemplated the marriage of his son—whom he would probably at a later period have acknowledged—by Douglass, Lady Sheffield, with Arabella.

But this design was speedily abandoned on the birth of his legitimate heir, that "noble Imp Robert of Dudley, Baron of Denbigh," whose early death was to shatter such high hopes.

Leicester had all his life been true to one secret dream, one passionately desired vision, that he might some day see upon the throne of England one of his name and line. His influence with Elizabeth was great; her hatred of the Scottish woman who had dared to quarter with her own the royal arms of England—a hatred that extended to Mary's son—was greater.

Leicester himself had seriously been considered as a Prince Consort. It was not strange that he believed it possible for his son to fill that position as the husband of Arabella Stuart. So the scheme was continued for some time, and on March 4th, 1583, Lord Paget wrote that the Queen should be informed of the practice between Leicester and the Countess for the Lady Arabella as "it comes on very lustily insomuch as the said Earl hath sent down the picture of his baby."[1]

With the help of the Earl of Leicester, the Dowager Countess of Shrewsbury would feel it not at all an

[1] See Calendar of State Papers for that date.

impossible task to secure definitely the succession for her "jewel." Her disappointment was doubtless as keen as the Earl's grief when death stepped forward to end their plan. Naturally Queen Mary had watched the suit with deep anxiety. In her letter to Mauvissière she speaks indignantly of the Countess of Shrewsbury's machinations "de faire tomber cette couronne sur la tête d'Arbella, sa petite-fille . . . par son mariage avec le fils du Comte de Leicester, divers tokens estant passez entre les enfants nourris en cette persuasion, et leurs peintures envoyées d'une part à l'autre."[1]

In 1589, however, the scheme of marrying Arabella to James was revived, this time by no less a person than Walsingham.[2] The King of Scotland was offered his choice between two brides, Anna of Denmark and Arabella. Whether Walsingham was serious in his offer, or whether Elizabeth would ever have consented to the arrangement is doubtful, but she was spared the trouble of deciding, as James very definitely refused both ladies. So the Countess of Shrewsbury was still free to pursue her favourite occupation of devising many and brilliant marriages for her granddaughter. Whatever may have been the private schemes of the Dowager Countess, the Queen held steadfastly to her purpose of professing to desire the Duke of Parma's son as a husband for Arabella.

It is quite impossible that she ever intended such a plan to be fulfilled. Arabella united to a Catholic would have become a serious menace as the following letter from Bernadino de Mendoza to the King of Spain, in December, 1586, shows:—

"I understand the English (Catholics in Flanders) have signified to the Duke of Parma that if when the

[1] Labanoff. [2] See the Scottish State Papers.

English enterprise be effected, he does not cast his eyes upon the Queen of Scots, Arabella Stuart, the granddaughter of the Countess of Shrewsbury who is eleven years old might marry his son; as she in default of the King of Scots is heiress to the throne being second cousin to the Queen of Scots whose grandmother married as second husband the Earl of Angus by whom she had a daughter married the Earl of Lennox; their eldest son married the Queen of Scots and was killed, while the second son married the daughter of the Countess of Shrewsbury as will be clearly seen by the genealogical tree of Scotland. If the King of Scotland be a heretic, the Duke of Parma, with your Majesty's consent, might marry his son to Arbella and support her claim, offering to the Pope in return for his help the Duchies of Parma and Placentia, to be restored to the Apostolic See. The idea has its drawbacks, but I have thought well to give your Majesty some account of it."[1]

Elizabeth was not likely to run any risks of that kind, but it suited her to continue the farce, which was no sooner useless to her than it was quietly dropped. Still, in 1591, John Riecroft wrote to Sir Robert Cecil that he was busy getting the picture of Arabella to carry to the Duke of Parma.[2] The following year Michael Moody, Sir Edward Stafford's servant, is employed "from beyond the sea" to "practise" with Arabella about her marriage with the Duke of Parma's son.[3] Three times had he travelled in that one year to England about the business and once before he had been sent for her picture.

Meanwhile Arabella led her happy sheltered life,

[1] Calendar of Spanish State Papers, Ed. Hume. Original letter in Paris Archives.

[2] Domestic State Papers. [3] *Ibid.*

P. Oudry.] [*Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.*

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

(National Portrait Gallery.)

caring not at all for the great destiny being planned for her. Written just about this time is a funny little letter to her "Good lady grandmother. I have sent your Ladyship," it runs, "the ends of my hair which were cut the sixth day of the moon on Saturday last, and with them a pot of jelly which my servant made."[1] Why the "sixth day of the moon," unless the Countess mingled some superstition with her common sense?

In this year, too, death was again to overshadow Arabella's life. Her cousin and aunt by marriage, Mary of Scotland, was executed in February. Arabella possessed several souvenirs of the unhappy woman, and one of them was the Queen's own Book of Hours.

The year 1588 was to be a momentous one to Arabella. Her uncle, Sir Charles Cavendish, took the little girl to London with him, and she was summoned to appear at Court. Her uncle himself describes her visit:—

"My lady Arbella hath been once to court, Her Majesty spoke unto her but not long and examined her nothing touching her book; she dined in the presence, but my Lord Treasurer bad her to supper, and at dinner I dining with her, and sitting over against him, he asked me whether I came with my niece or no, I said I came with her then he spake openly and directed his speech to Sir Walter Rawley, greatly in her commendation as that she had the French, the Italian, played of instruments, danced and writ very fair wished she were fifteen years old, and with that rounded Mr. Rawley in the ear, who answered it would be a happy thing. . . . At supper he made exceeding much of her, so did he the afternoon in his great chamber publickly, of Mall and Bess

[1] See *Third Report of the Historical MSS. Commission.*

George; and since he hath asked when she shall come again to Court."[1]

Whether or no Sir Charles left his niece behind him, which is hardly likely, or whether Scaramelli is correct when he mentions her appointment as lady-in-waiting in 1589, I have been unable to trace. It is, however, probable that she was fourteen before she was again summoned to Court. Certainly in 1589 Arabella was in favour with the Queen, as Gilbert Talbot writes: "The Queen asked me very carefully, the last day I saw her, for my Lady Arabella."[2]

It must have been a sorry change for the petted child to leave her country home and to be exposed to the caprices of the most capricious of queens. But at first Elizabeth appears to have given her a pleasant enough reception. Doubtless the Dowager Countess was delighted and looked for some great profit. But shortly afterwards the royal countenance began to frown upon the child, who was most likely only pursuing her imperious relative's counsel. How mistaken that counsel was the result showed. Writing many years later, Scaramelli gave a vivid account of Arabella's short career at Court.

"Fourteen years ago she was brought to Court by the Queen who made her one of her ladies-in-waiting; she was then quite young and displayed such haughtiness that she soon began to claim the first place; and one day on going into chapel she herself took prece-

[1] *Third Report of the Historical MSS. Commission.* Miss Costello gives a similar letter but with an altered first sentence. She also omits the last sentence as given above, and finished thus: "My Lady Arbell and the rest are very well, and it is wonderful how she profiteth in her book, and believe she will dance with very good grace, and can behave herself with proportion to every one in their degree." Either two very similar letters exist or the letter given in the Report is incomplete.

[2] Hunter's *Hallamshire.*

dence of all the Princesses who were in her Majesty's suite; nor would she retire though repeatedly told to do so by the Master of the Ceremonies, for she said that by God's will that was the very lowest place that could possibly be given her."[1] There is a ring of the old imperious Countess in that "by God's will." Scaramelli goes on to say: "At this the Queen in indignation, ordered her back to her private existence without so much as seeing her before she took her leave, or indeed ever afterwards."[1]

The truth of the latter part of the letter is doubtful, but certainly Arabella retired for the time being in disgrace.

In 1591 Arabella received an affectionate letter from her kingly cousin of Scotland, who occasionally corresponded with her. One trusts she felt flattered by the rather patronizing phrases it contains.

"Although the natural bonds of blood, my dear cousin, be sufficient for the good entertainments of amity, yet will I not abstain from these common offices of letters, having now so long keeped silence till the fame and report of so good parts in you have interpelled me, and as I cannot but in heart rejoice, so can I not forbear to signify to you hereby, what contentment I have received of your so virtuous behaviour wherein I pray you most heartily to continue, not that I doubt thereof, being certified of so full concourse of nature and nourriture, but that you may be the more encouraged to proceed in your virtuous demeanour, reaping the fruits of so honest estimation, the increase of your honour and joy, and your kindly affected friends, specially of me, whom it pleaseth most to see so virtuous and honourable scions arise of that race whereof we have both our descent.

[1] Venetian State Papers. 1603.

"Now hearing more certain notice of the place of your abode, I will the more frequently visit you by my letters, which I would be glad to do in person, expecting also to know from time to time of your estate by your own hand, being first summoned by me, knowing how far I shall be pleased thereby. In the meanwhile, and next occasion of further knowledge of your state, after my heartiest commendation, I wish you, my dear cousin, of God all honour and hearty contentment.

"From Holyrood House the 23 of December 1591.

"Your loving and affectionate cousin

"JAMES R."[1]

A year later, in 1592, the Dowager Countess was to receive a terrible fright. Burghley himself seemed to consider the matter serious, and his warning to the old Countess must have been an unpleasant surprise. She answered it as follows:—

"My honourable good Lord,

"I received your Lordship's letter on Wednesday, towards night, being the 25th. of September, by a servant of Mr. John Talbot, of Ireland. My good Lord, I was at the first much troubled to think that so wicked and mischiefous practices should be devised to enwrap my poor Arbell and me but I put my trust in the Almighty, and will use such diligent care as I doubt not but to prevent whatsoever shall be attempted by any wicked persons against the poor child. I am most bound to her Majesty that it pleased her to appoint your Lordship to give me the knowledge of this wicked practice and I humbly thank your Lordship for advertising it; if any suchlike hereafter be discovered, I pray your Lordship I may be prewarned. I will not have any unknown or suspected persons to come to my house. Upon the least suspicions that may happen here, anyway, I shall give

[1] Quoted from Miss Cooper's Life of Arabella.

advertisement to your Lordship. I have little resort to me; my house is furnished with sufficient company: Arbell walks not late; at such time as she shall take the air, it shall be near the house, and well attended on; she goeth not to anybody's house at all; I see her almost every hour in the day: she lieth in my bed-chamber. If I can be more precise than I have been I will be. I am bound in nature to be careful for Arbell: I find her loving and dutifull to me, yet her own good and safety is not dearer to me, nor more by me required than to accomplish her Majesty's pleasure, and that which I think may be for her service. I would rather wish many deaths than to see this or any such like wicked attempt to prevail. About a year since, there was one Harrison, a seminary, that lay at his brother's house about a mile from Hardwick, whom I thought then to have caused to be apprehended, and to have sent him up; but found he had licence for a time. Notwithstanding, the seminary soon after went from his brother's finding how much I was discontented with his lying so near me. Since my coming now into the country, I had some intelligence that the same seminary was come again to his brother's house; my son William Cavendish went thither of a sudden to make search for him, but could not find him. I write this much to your Lordship, that if any such traitorous and naughty persons (through her Majesty's clemency) be suffered to go abroad, that they may not harbour near my houses, Wingfield, Hardwick, or Chatsworth in Derbyshire, they are the most likely instruments to put a bad matter in execution. One Morley who hath attended on Arbell, and read to her by the space of three years and a half, showed to be much discontented since my return into the country, in saying he had lived in hope to have some annuity granted him by Arbell out of her lands during his life, or some lease of grounds to the value of forty pounds a year, alleging that he was so much damaged by leaving the University,

and now saw that if she were willing, yet not of ability, to make him any such assurance. I understanding by divers that Morley was so much discontented, and withal of late having some cause to be doubtful of his forwardness in religion (though I cannot charge him with papistry) took occasion to part with him.

"After he was gone from my house and all his stuff carried from hence, the next day he returned again very importunate to serve without standing upon any recompense, which made me more suspicious, and the more willing to part with him. I have no other in the house who will supply Morley's place very well for the time. I will have those that shall be sufficient in learning, honest and well-disposed as near as I can; I am forced to use the hand of my son William Cavendish, not being able to write so much myself for fear of bringing great pain to my head. He only is privy to your Lordship's letter, and neither Arbell, nor any other living, nor shall be.

"I beseech your Lordship I may be directed from you as occasion shall fall out. To the uttermost of my understanding I have and will be careful. I beseech the Almighty to send your Lordship a long and happy life, and so will I commit your Lordship to His protection. From my house at Hardwick the 21st. of September 1592.

"Your Lordship's as I am bound

"E. SHREWSBURY."[1]

The truth at the bottom of this agitating matter was that on the 27th August, 1592, Burghley had received the confession of a priest, James Yong *alias* Dingley.[2] In the margin is the significant note "disclosed to ye hazard of his life." He relates that Sir William Stanley—who appears to have intrigued with Spain—arrived at the Spanish Court with certain of his

[1] *Ellis' Letters.* [2] State Papers, vol. 242, folio 121.

servants, one Rolston among them. These men were employed to give "certain intelligences" to Don John Idiagues, a Councillor and Secretary of the King. They were sent on various missions which had nothing to do with Arabella, and finally Rolston returned to Stanley, "who said thou art welcome, I hope thou shalt win as good service for the Lady of which we have often talked, at which time he said no more being demanded after by an Englishman[1] one D. Stillington what ye Lady was, and, said he, if we had her, the most of our fear were past for any one which could hinder us in England. It is Arbella sayeth he who keeps with the Earl of Shrewsbury, who most certainly they will proclaim Queen if their Mistress should now happen to die; and the rather they will do it, for it is under a woman's government they may still rule after their own designment. But here is Simple sayeth he and Rolston who like cunning fellows have promised to convey her by stealth out of England, which if it be done I promise you shortly after shall visit Spain, and I judge they will prove men of their word. Shortly after Simple and Rolston were sent into Flanders since which time I never heard anything of ye men."[2]

Truly delightful reading for Elizabeth of England! No wonder the old Countess was warned, and begged in return to be "directed as occasion shall fall out."

It is not a little likely that Arabella felt all the restraint to which she was subjected most irksome, all the more as she was kept in ignorance of the cause. Probably she applied herself with greater attention to her studies which were to take such a serious form

[1] In the original these three words are ruled out.
[2] State Papers, vol. 242, folio 121.

that later she was able to "read Greek and Hebrew easily." Pawn she might be to be hustled hither and thither as policy dictated, but she would be no whit behind the learned Queen who ruled her.

The years slipped by for Arabella. Everything that the old Countess could devise was done to bring her grandchild again into favour with the Queen. She was constant in remembrances, in New Year's gifts, from herself and Arabella; and the Queen, pleased for the moment, was prodigal of promises—and matters went on as before.

"Right honourable and my very good Lady,[1]

"I have according to the purport of your honourable letters, presented your Ladyship's New Year's gift, together with my Lady Arbella's, to the Queen's Majesty; who hath very graciously accepted thereof, and taken an especial liking to that of my Lady Arbella. It pleased her Majesty to tell me that whereas in certain former letters of your Ladyship, your desire was that her Majesty would have that respect of my Lady Arbell, that she might carefully be bestowed to her Majesty's good liking, that according to the contents of those letters her Majesty told me that she would be careful of her, and withal hath returned a token to my Lady Arbella; which is not so good as I could wish it, nor so good as her Ladyship deserveth, in respect of the rareness of that which she sent unto her Majesty. But I beseech you good Madam, seeing it pleased her Majesty to say so much unto me touching her care for my La: Arbella, that your Ladyship will vouchsafe me so much favour as to keep it to yourself, not making any other acquainted with it, but rather repose the trust in me to take my

[1] Lady Dorothy Stafford was the widow of Sir William Stafford, and Bedchamber Woman to the Queen. She died September 22nd, 1604, and is buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster.

pportunity for the putting her Majesty in mind thereof, which I will do as carefully as I can. And thus being always bound to your Ladyship for your good honourable kindnesses towards me, I humbly commit your Ladyship to the safe protection of Almighty God. From Westminster this xiiith. of January 1600.

"Your Ladyship's most bounden

"DOROTHY STAFFORD.

"To the right honourable my very good Lady the Countess of Shrewsbury, Dowager."[1]

This New Year's gift of Arabella's was "one scarfe or veil of lawn network flourished with silk of sundry colours and silver."[2] The Queen in return sent her relative some gilt plate, which is probably the present referred to by Lady Dorothy as "not so good as I could wish."

In the following year yet another suitor for Arabella was "spoken about"—none other than the Prince of Condé, but he, like so many of the others, held his place for but a short time.

In 1596 Arabella had again been considered as a bride for a king. Henry the Fourth of France was striving to obtain the dissolution of his marriage with his wife Margaret, and though he had by no means succeeded, his forethought prompted him to the consideration of various eligible princesses. Nor, according to Sully, was he prepared to accept a dowerless bride.

"The King began to consider with me what Princess of Europe he should choose for his wife, in case his marriage with Margaret of Valois was dissolved. 'I should have no objection,' said he, 'to the Infanta of Spain, provided that with her I could marry the Low Countries; neither would I refuse the Princess Ara-

[1] Hunter's *Hallamshire.* [2] Nichol.

bella of England, if, since it is publickly said the crown of England really belongs to her, she were only declared presumptive heiress of it.' But there is no reason to expect either of these things will happen."

Certainly Henry of Navarre lacked not ambition.

Later still Arabella's name was coupled with that of Duke Matthias. But by that year—1600—Elizabeth's policy was sufficiently obvious. Even James the Sixth, who had been frequently alarmed by rumours of Arabella's marriage, was inclined to entirely disbelieve this last report.

"And he does not mistrust her Majesty's meaning on that point towards him, her Majesty having promised never to do anything to his hurt."[1]

Elizabeth was growing old; some settlement of the difficult subject of the succession was becoming vitally necessary. Her ministers were at last forced to contemplate anxiously their future course. There were but two claimants to the throne of really serious pretensions—James the Sixth of Scotland and Arabella Stuart. Burghley had died just prior to this—1598—and his son, Sir Robert Cecil, "the little hunchback, but very wise,"[2] had stepped into his place. He of all the statesmen carried the greatest weight, and on his decision to a great extent rested the chances of success for the claimants to Elizabeth's throne. For awhile he hesitated. Nicolo Molin wrote of him later: "On the death of Elizabeth it was thought he would fall; chiefly the new King was well aware that the father of Lord Salisbury (Molin was writing in 1607, after Sir Robert Cecil had been created Earl of Salisbury) was the prime author and advisor of the death of Queen

[1] George Nicolas to Sir Robert Cecil. State Papers of Scotland. February 16th, 1600.

[2] Venetian State Papers.

Mary, the King's mother, and people generally held that he would take vengeance on those who had done so unjust a deed as the Queen's execution and would reward those who had served her. But things have turned out very different, for the latter are neglected and despised, the former favoured and caressed."

Cecil had not hesitated long; he was necessary to James, he of all men could best smooth the pathway to the throne. Before Elizabeth's death Cecil was in friendly secret correspondence with James. The shadow of a crown was again hovering over Arabella, and again it was another's hands which grasped the substance. Henceforth in England she would only be the first lady of the Court.

But the English Catholics were resolute in desiring a ruler of their own faith. They applied to Philip of Spain. It was not difficult to persuade him. Religious conviction urged him on, and in the event of his claiming the English crown for himself or for a relative he would be wronging no one. James the Sixth was a Protestant, and his mother Mary had disinherited him in consequence of his heresy and bequeathed her rights to the English crown to Philip of Spain, who traced his descent from John of Gaunt through Philippa Plantagenet. Neither the Pope nor the French liked the situation, though it was rendered more bearable by Philip's declaration that he had no intention of governing England himself, only of appointing a Catholic ruler—his daughter the Infanta. Thus came the disaster of the Armada and the crippling, for the time, of Spain. But in 1598 Philip died, and was succeeded by his son, on whom the English Catholics urged his sister's claim. Philip the Third, however, was not enthusiastic, and the plan dragged on for two years.

By then Isabella the Infanta and her husband the Archduke were rulers of the Netherlands. Presently it was discovered that money would be needed to place the new ruler on the English throne, and the Spanish exchequer was depleted.

By the year 1603 the Spaniards had made up their minds; they declined to find a Catholic sovereign for England; they had still, however, a desire to aid the conversion of that country, and to this end they agreed to support any ruler of their own religion, or any who would agree to tolerate it, that the English Catholics should choose.

"Ships were to be fitted out and a fresh supply of money sent to Flanders; the selected candidate was to be recommended to conciliate other pretenders by almost dividing the country between them, and the Spanish force to be sent was to request the new sovereign to grant the Isle of Wight as a station, which once gained the Spanish had no intention of giving up. . . . There is little reason to doubt, however, that although the official decision of the Spanish Council was not adopted until the beginning of March, its drift was known to the English Catholics by the end of the year 1602 or very early in 1603, and that the person selected by them to be aided by Spanish arms was Arabella Stuart, whose close imprisonment may thus be explained."[1]

About this time Arabella emerged definitely from her obscurity, but only to be surrounded by such contradictory assertions as to make her story a veritable enigma.

One assertion at least can very easily be disproved. Whether from the choice of the English Catholics resting on her, or whether from her close connection

[1] Hume, *Life of Raleigh.*

with the younger Countess of Shrewsbury, it is frequently stated that at some period of her life she professed the Roman Catholic religion. Of that there is no proof; on the contrary, there is every reason to believe that she did not.

Scaramelli, writing in 1603, shortly before Elizabeth's death, gives us this picture:—

"Arabella, born in England, is now a woman of twenty-eight years of age; of great beauty,[1] and remarkable qualities, being gifted with many accomplishments, among them be knowledge of Latin, French, Spanish and Italian, besides her native English. She has very exalted ideas, having been brought up in the firm belief that she would succeed to the crown. She has always lived in poverty, far from London, in the charge of a Puritan governess, *and she too* is of that persuasion."[2]

Now this man was Venetian Secretary in London at the time, and though in small matters he erred from time to time, yet his information is usually reliable. Besides, he was a devout Catholic, as his refusal to attend Elizabeth's funeral a little later showed: "to avoid entering the church and attending heretic services, and thereby causing inevitable scandal and a danger to myself." The man who wrote that would have been overjoyed if he could have conscientiously admitted that Arabella belonged to his Church.

Many years after—on May 12th, 1611—Antonio Foscarini and Marc' Antonio Correr, both Venetians and Ambassadors and both Catholics, wrote: "Lady Arabella, who *hitherto has professed the Puritan religion*, may very easily become a Catholic along with her husband, in the hope of finding protection more easily."[2]

[1] Opinions as to her beauty greatly varied.
[2] Venetian State Papers.

That was written on the occasion of Arabella's flight, when her destination was supposed to be a Catholic country. Unfortunately for her she never reached it, so that it was unnecessary for her to change her religion for the protection of another.

In 1602 Richard Bishop sent to Cecil all the anonymous information he had gathered: amongst other items that Arabella is a notable Puritan. And Parsons, the priest, was so doubtful on the subject that during her youth all he dared to say of her was, "her religion seems to be as tender, green, and flexible as is her age and sex, and to be wrought hereafter and settled according to future time and events."[1]

But in 1611, the year when she was imprisoned for the last time, it was stated definitely by a contemporary that "the Lady Arabella hath not been found inclinable to Popery."

In face of such proofs it is only reasonable to assume that she remained firm in the faith in which she had been brought up. Yet it was most probably in 1602 that a rumour reached the King of Scotland that Arabella had changed her religion. His letter to Lord Henry Howard on the subject is interesting in that it shows the attitude James had adopted to his cousin. His relief on learning that the report was groundless must have been great.

"I am from my heart sorry for this accident fallen to Arbella, but as nature enforces me to love her as the creature living nearest of kin to me, next my own children, so would I for her own well that such order were taken as she might be preserved from evil company, and that evil-inclined persons might not have access unto her to supplant her abusing of the frailty

[1] D'Israeli.

of her youth and sex; for if it be true as I am creditably informed, that she is lately moved by the persuasions of Jesuits to change her religion, and declare herself Catholic, it may easily be judged that she hath been very evil attended on by them that should have had greater care of her, when persons so odious, not only to all good Englishmen, but to all the rest of the world, Spain only excepted should have had access to have conferred with her at such leisure as to have disputed and moved her in matters of religion."[1]

[1] *Secret Correspondence of R. Cecil.* (Probable date 1602.)

CHAPTER IV

THE year 1603 was full of strange happenings for Arabella. At its commencement England was uneasy, fearful of what the months following might bring forth.

Elizabeth, moreover, showed signs of failing. Loud swelled the murmurs regarding her successor, but the Queen made no choice, or if she did gave no sign to show where it lay. Cecil, busy, unperturbed, continued his secret correspondence with the King of Scotland.

Rumours of stealthy plotting filled the air; the Catholic emissaries sped to and fro between England and the Continent. Brains, fertile with improbabilities, wove new designs round the favourite of the Catholic faction.

Lingard says: "It was proposed that she (Arabella) should marry the Cardinal Farnese,[1] who could trace his descent from John of Gaunt, and that all Catholics should be exhorted to support their united pretensions. When this visionary scheme was suggested to Clement the Eighth he appeared to entertain it with pleasure, but was careful not to commit himself by any public avowal of his sentiments. He signed, indeed, two breves addressed to the English nobles and clergy. But in them he mentioned no name. He merely exhorted the Catholics to refuse their aid to every

[1] It was suggested that the Pope should secularize him.

[*Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.*

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

(National Portrait Gallery.)

claimant who would not promise to support the ancient worship and to take the oath which had formerly been taken by the Catholic monarchs. These instruments were forwarded to the papal nuncio at Brussels with an injunction to keep them secret till the death of Elizabeth. Garnet obeyed, and on the succession of the King of Scots prudently committed them to the flames."

This scheme seemed even more foolish than that proposed by the Spaniards, and was hardly likely, even under the most favourable circumstances, to have succeeded.

Rumour, in 1603, was very busy with Arabella's affairs, many were the hints men whispered of her doings, and many absurd stories were circulated about her. It is strange how the reports of 1603 have been accepted as facts by later generations.

Briefly, this was the story evolved and accepted later as an accurate description of Arabella's proceedings for some months before the death of the Queen. Arabella was considering matrimony again, this time with a son of the Earl of Northumberland, at which the Queen was so angry that she imprisoned her. During her imprisonment she found means to become betrothed to—some accounts say to marry—William Seymour, a playmate of her childhood;—for William, Thomas is sometimes substituted, who is given variously as a son or grandson of the Earl of Hertford; who together with Lord Beauchamp occasionally figure as prospective bridegrooms.

Elizabeth, furious at this semi-royal alliance, is said to have withdrawn Arabella from her prison, to send her to one where she would be more strictly kept; one writer suggests where she would have been forced to end her troubled career. Such is the story that has

survived for nearly three centuries, a curious mixture of the Hertford-Stuart episodes of 1603 and 1611.

Father Rivers, a Jesuit, was the first person to mention the matter. As early as July 26th, 1602, he wrote: "I hear some have an intention to marry the Earl of Hertford's second son with Arbella, and to carry it (the succession) that way."

We know that the old Countess of Shrewsbury was easy to offend; there is no doubt that Arabella frequently offended her. As the Dowager grew older everyone complained of her fierce temper and tyrannical behaviour. Her own children fared as badly as anyone in this respect, and frequently one at least of them was not on speaking terms with the old autocrat. Arabella, through no fault of her own, had failed to obtain the Queen's favour; more, she had managed to displease her, and to be returned to her grandmother something very like a prisoner.

That Arabella at twenty-seven should be moneyless, crownless, and husbandless must have been a sore blow to the Dowager's ambition, and probably she distributed the blame between the Queen and Arabella. As the Queen could not be affected by the wrath of Elizabeth Shrewsbury, it is very possible that Arabella had to bear the double share of her displeasure. Yet, after making every allowance for the discomfort of Arabella's position, it is impossible to understand her behaviour in 1602–3. According to Mr. Bradley, who had access to private papers,[1] three weeks before Christmas, 1603, Arabella persuaded, much against his will, John Dodderidge, an old servant of her grandmother, to ride to Amesbury and see Kirton, the Earl of Hertford's lawyer. The message he was

[1] Cecil papers at Hatfield.

to give him stated that Arabella was aware that some time before the Earl of Hertford had suggested to the Dowager Countess of Shrewsbury that his grandson, the *elder* son of Lord Beauchamp, should marry her granddaughter. This offer it appears the Dowager had refused, and Dodderidge was told to say to the Earl that if he was "desirous of the same still he must take some other course." This was a plain invitation to the Earl to devise a romantic rescue of Arabella.

Here a hitch occurred in the plan. Dodderidge, either possessed of less courage or more prudence than most men, declined to act as messenger. Finally, after many arguments, he was over-persuaded, and went direct to the Earl of Hertford in London. There he delivered his message to the Earl on December 30th. And now comes the surprising part of the story. The Earl, who but six months before was represented as asking for Arabella's hand for his grandson, scolded the messenger furiously for daring to come to him on such an errand, and locked him in his room until the following day, when he took the fearful Dodderidge to Cecil, and compelled him to retell his story.

It was the first of January when Elizabeth learned of what was brewing, and great was her wrath and consternation at the news. She at once despatched Sir Henry Brounker, armed with Dodderidge's confession, to Hardwick to question Arabella and the Countess. The Countess, hearing for the first time of the matter, received it very much as her great namesake had done, and her wrath was not lessened on hearing of the Queen's displeasure.

Sir Henry proceeded to question Arabella, who at first refused to answer, then denied everything; and finally, finding that Dodderidge had told all he knew,

confessed that she had sent him to the Earl of Hertford. She also stated that the Earl of Hertford had known of the affair from the beginning. By that statement Arabella presumably meant that she believed the Earl to have desired her as his grandson's wife. Sir Henry, however, declined to believe that Hertford had known anything at all of the business. And this point, the Earl's share in the matter, has never been solved. If he knew nothing, then either Arabella had been deceived by whoever told her of his supposed offer, or the story was a figment of her imagination. Dodderidge mentioned that both her uncles, William and Henry Cavendish, aided her in her scheme. If so, had they any reason for deceiving Arabella? Henry, a little later, did a suspicious thing, which, had it not been for Elizabeth's timely death, might have ended disastrously for him. Again, the Earl of Hertford's eldest son, Lord Beauchamp, was reputed disaffected to the Scottish succession, and was popularly expected to raise a rebellion on Elizabeth's death. It is quite possible that the suggestion for Arabella's marriage with his eldest son had come from him, and that he used his father's name. If he were really disaffected and sought to alter the succession, an alliance with Arabella would prove of the greatest service. Nor was Lord Beauchamp's claim to the throne very remote. The Earl of Hertford[1] had married, about 1560, Catherine Grey, who traced her descent from Henry the Seventh's daughter Mary Tudor, just as Arabella traced hers from Henry the Seventh's *elder* daughter Margaret. The marriage had been a secret one, and one which when discovered had raised a fearful storm. Elizabeth was, of course, greatly incensed, and ordered both the

[1] Cooper.

offenders to prison. There, about 1561, Lord Beauchamp was born. That event did not, naturally, mend matters, and Elizabeth refused to hear of the enlargement of the prisoners. Seven years passed, and Catherine Seymour died, still in prison. Some signs of relenting then appeared, and eventually the Earl of Hertford regained his liberty. Judging by his later letters, his imprisonment had left no pleasant recollections with him, and it is not surprising if he desired to retain Elizabeth's favour. This he managed to do, for in spite of Arabella's declaration to Brounker, Cecil and Stanhope wrote a little later to the Countess of Shrewsbury and repeated that the Queen considered Arabella to have been deceived by someone as to the truth of the Earl of Hertford's wishing to marry her to one of his grandchildren. Possibly Henry Cavendish may have acted in unison with Lord Beauchamp, as their opinions seem to have been much the same.

The first glimpse of the public's attitude towards the affair is in a despatch from Scaramelli on February 27th, 1603.

"The change which has been made by increasing the guard on the person of Lady Arabella Stuart, on account of a suspicion entertained by the Queen lest she should fly, gives me occasion to explain to your Serenity all that I hear with any certainty about the claimants to this throne, and the opinions regarding them; but as this is a subject which it is absolutely forbidden to discuss under pain of 'loesa majestas,' it is very difficult to arrive at any certain conclusion. . . .[1] At present the Queen has conceived some fear lest Arabella should escape from the castle where she

[1] The gap is filled with the pedigrees of the Hertfords, Greys, and Stuarts. The Catherine of Suffolk mentioned is, of course, Catherine Grey.

is confined, as there are rumours that she is being sought in marriage. People say if indeed it is true, that she has an inclination towards Thomas Seymour the son as I have already set forth of Catherine of Suffolk and Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford. Thomas and Arabella are of like age and of most favourable conditions of mind and body. In such a delicate matter the Queen either does not wish to act with rigour upon a mere suspicion—for Seymour shows himself far from ready—which would rouse comment among the populace, or for some other reason; she has, therefore, very quietly increased the guards round the castle fifty miles out of London, where the unhappy lady has lived for many years, buried, as one may say, not perforce but of her own will. The ministers are anxious on the subject. But even if the King of Spain had a hand in this matter they think that there is no more danger from him, except in the case of rebellions, for those who have most money will have most support, is the common opinion. It is however a fixed opinion that the ministers, being convinced that the kingdom is strong rather in reputation than in actual forces, are resolved among themselves not to be governed by a woman again, but to give the crown to the King of Scots, as they cannot judge the future except by its consequences."[1]

A certain amount of fiction may be observed mingling with the Secretary's facts, but the letter is interesting in that it shows from an unprejudiced source the position Arabella held in the popular imagination. Scaramelli is wrong, however, about her residence, which was still at Hardwick, and more than fifty miles from London, neither was she the guarded prisoner he would lead us to suppose. No mention is made of any guards being employed at Hardwick; after Sir Henry's

[1] Venetian State Papers. 1603.

revelations to the Dowager Countess, Arabella was certainly restrained, forbidden her usual rides and walks, or any intercourse with her companions. Later, she complains that even her books were denied her, but all this was the outcome of the Dowager's fear and wrath. Wrathful, indeed, she was, and almost equally perplexed, for Arabella persisted in behaving in the most extraordinary way. Before Sir Henry left Hardwick she complained to him that she was badly used, and that she refused to live any longer with her grandmother.

Brounker appears to have considered her hysterical, which she undoubtedly was, unless indeed she was then the victim of insanity. Mr. Bradley, speaking of the letters of hers of this period that he had seen, describes them as extraordinary in tone, shaky in handwriting, and blotted with tears, and in some cases incoherent. This was very different from her usual style, as her later letters are, for the time in which she lived, unusually clear in matter and fairly written. Naturally the Dowager was furious with Arabella, and did not spare her reproaches. Arabella persisted in her intention of obtaining her removal. In this, however, she failed; Cecil wrote that the Queen refused to hear of such a thing, but that she would pardon Arabella on condition that she behaved in the future. She was to be allowed her liberty, but some trustworthy person was to be appointed to look after her. By this time Arabella was employed in pursuing Sir Henry Brounker with letters full of mysterious references to a never-named lover and complaints of her grandmother.

The latter, too, wrote at length, complaining of the extraordinary dislike manifested by Arabella, and protesting that the trouble would eventually kill her. It

was probably about this time that Arabella wrote the following letter to her uncle Edward :—

"Noble gentleman,

"I am as unjustly accused of contriving a comedy as you (in my conscience) a tragedy. Councillors are acquainted with both our bad hands, but whilst we may wash our hands in innocence, let the grand accuser and all his ministers do their worst. God will be on our side and reveal the truth to our most gracious sovereign 'maugre' all wicked and indirect practices wherewith some seek to misinform her Majesty but I thank the Almighty it pleased her highness to deal most graciously with me, and by her Majesty's commandment have liberty to choose my friends by whom I may better inform her Majesty of some matters concerning myself and divers of the very best friends you and I have, therefore I request you most earnestly to deliver a message from me to her sacred Majesty which shall be greatly to her Majesty's contentment, your honour and behoof, and is of great importance. It requireth great haste and I have advertised a most honourable privy Councillor that I have sent for you to employ you in her Majesty's service so that you may not excuse yourself or lose time in your own respect whom it concerns in more ways than this. And of your own honourable disposition, I doubt not but you would bestow a journey hither and go to the Court for my sake.

"Your father's love and your faithful friend

"ARABELLA STUART.

"I pray you in kindest manner commend me to my lady Ogle and sweet Mrs. Talbot whom I am very desirous to see and entreat her to hasten you hither for the sooner you come the better for us all.

"To my honourable and assured good friend Mr. Talbot."[1]

[1] Ashmole MSS. in Bodleian endorsed only "Feb. 22," but usually considered to belong to this year.

Then Arabella fell seriously ill for a fortnight, and was obliged to have a doctor in close attendance. But, ill or well, Arabella never ceased to perplex the Queen with letters full of references to her unknown lover. The Dowager Countess was quite as puzzled as the Queen; repeatedly did she deny that she had any knowledge, or suspicion even, of a lover, nor can it now be known whether Arabella had any ground for her statement.

By March the Venetian Secretary was writing as follows:—

"The marriage of Lady Arabella is discussed every day with greater freedom. . . . Arabella in second grade and the Earl of Hertford in third grade of claim have no taint of rebellion or aught but schemes for the future against them, and so it would be impossible in the ordinary course to prosecute them. All the same as the situation is growing more serious, and the Queen's anger is mounting, many people fear that just as Mary Stuart's first crime was her secret betrothal to the Duke of Norfolk, so the joy of Arabella's ill-matched and unconsummated marriage may be changed into a bloody tragedy."[1]

That was scarcely likely, though Arabella's wild behaviour might certainly give credence to the rumour.

She wrote again complaining of her grandmother, and demanding permission to see her friends and obtain what amusements she pleased. Finally, she refused to eat or drink so long as she resided with the Dowager, who, finding her in earnest, was forced to allow her to live at Oldcotes, only two miles from Hardwick.

Some time before this, however, another rumour

[1] Venetian State Papers. 1603.

spread over London. Scaramelli, well up in gossip as usual, writes to the Doge that the tutor and chaplain of Arabella Stuart had been found with his throat cut. "He was the most intimate of all those about her. Rumour says that he killed himself because he was conscious of his own intrigues. It seems that her Majesty will take no steps at present, although she has in her hands intercepted letters of Arabella which are of high importance."

These letters may have been appeals for help to aid her in escaping from her grandmother. Arabella appears to have importuned the unfortunate tutor for many years to that effect. Probably Scaramelli was wrong, and Starkey was never Arabella's regular tutor, but for seven or eight years before his death he was tutor to one of William Cavendish's sons, and may from time to time have aided Arabella in her studies. He appears to have been ill-paid, and certain promises of preferment were never fulfilled. In consequence he left Hardwick in 1602, and afterwards had certainly some correspondence with Arabella, though in his confession he protested it was of the most innocent kind. He appears to have brooded over the treatment he received at Hardwick, and, overcome with his troubles, in a moment of despair to have committed suicide.

In a confession found after his death, he speaks in the highest terms of Arabella. That she was really miserable at Hardwick his account confirms, as he speaks of often finding her in tears at her book, and of her complaining to him as to her grandmother's treatment.

Unfortunately for Arabella, the world either never knew or refused to believe the true cause of Starkey's

death, and coupled his name with Arabella's in a way that did her lasting harm.

Scaramelli mentions "the partizans of the king of Scotland, the most powerful party, in order to destroy public sympathy for Arabella are spreading reports *prejudicial to her character* as an honest woman both in the past and in the present." That was written in 1603, and is probably the explanation of the slighting allusions which occur in connection with Arabella both in her lifetime and afterwards. At the time when Scaramelli wrote of her these reports did Arabella little harm, possibly because their motive was plainly recognized. Later, as often happens, the occasion was forgotten, only the spoken words remained in the recesses of men's minds, to come forth again, more weighty, more befouled, as the way of slander is, when disgrace or injury was planned for Arabella.

Arabella presently sent another letter to the Queen, making a most incautious allusion to herself as a friend of the late Earl of Essex. Fortunately for Arabella Elizabeth was too ill to read it.

"I might add that the Carnival, which according to the English Calendar continued down to the day before yesterday, has delayed the meeting (the writer's with the Queen), only here in Court it has not been observed with the usual accompaniment of dances and comedies; for the Queen for many days has not left her chamber. And although they say that the reason for this is her sorrow for the death of the Countess (of Nottingham) nevertheless the truer cause is that the business of Lady Arbella has reached such a pitch. . . . It is well known that this unexpected event has greatly disturbed the Queen, for she has suddenly withdrawn into herself, she who was wont to live so gaily,—specially in these last years of her life, when, as far

as health was concerned, her days seemed numerous indeed, but not burdensome,—and to force herself to throw off all care but that of enjoying life. Now she allows grief to overcome her strength, and so anxious is she that rumours of this beginning of troubles should not spread beyond the kingdom, that she forbade either persons or letters to leave any of the ports, although perceiving that this provision came late and was too violent to secure silence, she subsequently abandoned it."[1]

The Secretary, when he wrote of the Queen as "suddenly withdrawn into herself," wrote of the beginning of the last tragedy of her life. From this onwards she never left her rooms, but passed long days in silent, brooding misery. Neither Arabella's behaviour nor grief for the death of Lady Nottingham was responsible for the Queen's state; she had other troubles.

Probably she had either not been told or had not realized the latest development in Arabella's story.

Arabella was again at Hardwick, and apparently no better contented with her lot. At any rate, her uncle, Henry Cavendish, and a Catholic friend named Stapleton determined to carry her off from Hardwick. Whether the plan was of their own originating, or whether some other power stood behind them is unknown; but owing to the determination of the Dowager, who closed the gates and refused to allow Stapleton to enter or Arabella to go forth, their plan was a failure. The Dowager, of course, sent the news to Court, and Sir Henry Brounker was again sent to investigate. Stapleton had by that time escaped to London, but Henry Cavendish was ordered there to report himself, and Arabella was removed to Sheriff Halton.[2]

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers. [2] Cooper.

The Queen was still "withdrawn into herself"; no change for the better had taken place. In vain her attendants urged her to rouse herself, to try some remedies. In vain her ministers sat with her, chatted, flattered as of old, brought her musicians, who filled her rooms with lively music. She was to remain unroused, pitiful in her silent misery, till death claimed her on the 24th of March, 1603.

Elizabeth was dead, Arabella in safe keeping, the Catholics unready, the Spanish help unready also and too far off to be of any use. But Sir Robert Cecil was prepared, as he had been for months past, and James the Sixth of Scotland was proclaimed as James the First of England.

Arabella had won her wish at last. By the advice of Sir Henry, and by Cecil's orders, she had been removed on the very day of the Queen's death to Wrest House, nine miles from Bedford, and placed in the care of a connection of her own, Henry Grey, sixth Earl of Kent.[1] Certainly Arabella had received very easy treatment, both from Brounker and Cecil. The former, indeed, dwells on her hysterical state, and the question arises how far in 1603 was Arabella responsible for her actions?

For a young woman of twenty-seven, her complaints and her actions alike appear childish. Her aunt and her husband, Mary and Gilbert Talbot, were at that time her friends. Later, she expressly speaks of their kindness to her during her troubles. Her uncles William and Henry, from whatever motive, appear to have treated her kindly. So that Arabella, even if she was thoroughly unhappy with her grandmother, was not without sympathy and affection. It was never suggested that the Dowager ill-treated her. The

[1] Henry Grey, it will be remembered, had married a daughter of Arabella's uncle Gilbert.

worst that could be said of her treatment of Arabella was that she was tyrannical and ill-tempered, lavish of reproaches because the girl had not fulfilled the ambitious hopes her birth had kindled, and that she managed her affairs for her, treating her like a child. Surely this was not sufficient to cause the extraordinary outburst in which Arabella indulged. She had lived for seven-and-twenty years with her grandmother, yet for a few months her dislike was so strong that she refused to eat and drink in the same house. Her one steadfast determination was to get away from her grandmother. For this end and for this alone, she stated, did she send her messenger to the Hertfords. She had been, and was always, delicate. Cecil a little later spoke of her as high-spirited; highly strung appears a more suitable term. Grant this, that she was delicate and highly strung, that her grandmother had been more than usually disagreeable, and that Arabella herself was not very far from a serious illness, and her statement that she had concocted a foolish scheme to escape is feasible—if she had stuck to her story. But instead of doing so, she introduces a mysterious lover, one of whom her grandmother knows nothing, and it is highly impossible that such an one could have existed undiscovered in her closely guarded state, fills her letters with incoherent and impossible stories, and finally complicates the matter with her grief and friendship for my late lord of Essex.

For years it was believed that Arabella towards the close of her life was a raving lunatic. This has long been disproved. Yet, at the time, rumours were current regarding her insanity; the end of her life—what might almost be termed her refusal to live—gives some colour to the rumour. Most probably Arabella

was subject to *intermittent* attacks of insanity, which left her brain clear and sensible between whiles. It would almost seem that she had such an attack in 1603. Her incoherency, her hysteria, her apparently unfounded mention of her lover, of Essex, her sudden and violent antipathy to her grandmother, seem to point to the same conclusion. Later, she was to visit her grandmother of her own free will, and she appears to have voluntarily offered herself as mediator between the Dowager and some of her relatives. If her childish affection for her grandmother had not come back, she was at least able to stay in the same house with her and visit her while she was ill. Moreover, once she was removed to Wrest House a sudden calm ensued. No more was heard of the mysterious lover; she was willing to act rationally, and, by the time James had arrived in England, to be guided by Cecil, and finally to lead her life at Court in a perfectly usual way. Whatever its cause, her outburst in 1603 was abnormal; nothing like it was to occur again in Arabella's life for many years. Scaramelli, on the 12th of April, 1603, wrote as follows: "Arabella too, *no longer mad*, writes in all humility from her prison, that she desires no other husband, no other state, no other life, than that which King James, her cousin and lord in his goodness may assign her."[1]

"No longer mad." Was that phrase used by Scaramelli simply as a contemptuous allusion to Arabella's absurd behaviour? or was there a rumour at the time of Arabella's insanity? It is a doubt that has never been settled, and probably never can be.

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

CHAPTER V

IT was in April, 1603, that James, after an affectionate parting from his queen and children, set out on the journey that was to end, he fervently hoped, in establishing him firmly on the English throne. He set forth with many misgivings, which were soon smoothed away by the news of his peaceable proclamation as James the First of England.

The commonalty of England had during Elizabeth's reign shown themselves devoted and affectionate to her; the Catholic nobles, on the other hand, had long sought some weapon that should make an end of the Protestant government. That the people should be grief-stricken at Elizabeth's death, and resentful of a successor whose countrymen they hated, that the Catholics should seize the opportunity for a terrifying rebellion, was a contingency very likely to arise in the King's timid mind.

So it is no wonder that he was amazed at the reception which everywhere awaited him once he had crossed the Border;—amazed and perhaps a little disgusted.

As he rode on from Berwick, a leisurely progress, diversified by civic receptions, by gorgeous pageants presented to him at great nobles' houses, and above all by his favourite pastime, the hunt, the people of England thronged the route.

Nor did they stand as silent crowds, drawn together by curiosity to see what manner of man was to take

[*Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.*

JAMES I.

(National Portrait Gallery.)

their Queen's place, but as crowds that had apparently forgotten alike Elizabeth's life and death, and were well-nigh hysterical in the joyous demonstrations with which they greeted their King. Indeed, as he neared London, the feverish, shouting throng grew so great that, to avoid the dust raised by the concourse, James and his train pursued their journey across the fields. So it was not wonderful that his first impression of the English people was that they were but a fickle, unstable, heedless race, careless who ruled them, so that they had amusement, excitement, something for which to shout.

As he passed on further and further into England, he found another thing at which to marvel—the easy, luxurious life which is based on wealth. The houses where he and his followers rested—such houses as Theobalds, the home of Secretary Cecil—were palaces, splendid palaces, in the eyes of the Scotchmen.

But for those easeful appointments, those magnificent surroundings, a price had to be paid, as King James found. It was impossible, amid all the glitter of his new life, to continue the primitive ways which many years' usage had endeared to him; ways that, if coarse, were homely. The time had come when the jocular, shabby man, badly dressed and badly served, whose familiar pleasantries were readily answered by others at least as familiar, must cease to exist, and a new and gorgeous figure well in keeping with his background must appear. This decisive change was first made at Theobalds, where for four days Cecil gave a lavish entertainment to the King. It was noted with satisfaction as a matter of great importance that there James for the first time ordered his household "in the English fashion."

How different was the Scottish mode of court-life from

that of the English—or indeed from that of many of the Courts—the following will show:—

"The King lived in Scotland hardly like a private gentleman, let alone a sovereign, making many people sit down with him at table, waited on by rough servants, who did not even remove their hats, treating all with a French familiarity, reserving all expenditure of pomp for the service of the Queen. But now the government are re-introducing all the splendour of the English Court and almost adoring his Majesty who day by day adopts the practices suitable to his greatness."[1]

The Venetian Secretary—there was no ambassador at the moment in England—was the decorous representative of a highly decorous Court; most punctilious in ceremonious detail; one can feel his shrinking as he penned that sentence "who did not even remove their hats."

Cecil had undoubtedly aided James to the throne, but the popular belief was that neglect, if not disgrace, would be his portion for his family's share in Mary of Scotland's death. He had employed spies for many years in Scotland, he knew the character of the Scottish King. James might be grateful for his help, but Cecil was not inclined to trust to that. It was no accident that the King began his new and more splendid life at Secretary Cecil's house, no accident that all were urged to show such veneration, such homage that it amounted to "almost adoring" the sovereign. Few feel gratitude, many are accessible to flattery; Cecil had rather stake on the latter than the former. The King's four days at Theobalds passed in a whirl of splendour, of compliments, of deference, of servility.

[1] Letter of the Venetian Secretary to the Doge and Senate. Cal. Ven. State Papers. 1603.

And James liked servility; compliments too were new and therefore precious—he had certainly not been in the habit of receiving them from Elizabeth;—how could he help but feel drawn to the little man that organized this orgy of praise?

And the result of Cecil's knowledge and diplomacy was best sketched four years later.

"Greatest and most eminent of all is Robert, Earl of Salisbury, First Secretary of State, whose authority is so absolute that he may truly be called the King. . . . He is a man about forty-eight years of age, short, crooked-backed, but with a noble countenance and features. He speaks his own tongue admirably, French very well. . . . On the other hand he is a friend to his friends and ready to do them a service, though he is more ready for revenge than for affection. He is haughty and terrible, he uses violent language to all sorts of people, a bitter foe to the Catholics, and as long as he lives and governs there is no hope of any alleviation for them. . . . And with truth it may be said he is the Prince of this kingdom. Of his wealth I will not speak, for it passes the bounds of all belief."[1]

Meanwhile we have left the King at Theobalds busy adopting the practices of English greatness. He seemed to take very kindly to them all, and his courtiers hoped that he had exchanged his habits with as gleeful a pleasure as he had changed the Scottish fashion of his garments for the English one. But his temperament proved not nearly as pliable as it promised. He had always disliked change, and he had always been mean in small things. A frequent complaint in books and tracts written during, or shortly after, his reign is the unspeakable shabbiness of his

[1] Report. 1607.

clothes. Also he persisted that the fashion of his suits should be the same for long periods together. That alone seems to have disturbed the courtiers of his day, but when they discovered that his gracious Majesty insisted on wearing his suits until they were ragged, they became well-nigh speechless with indignation.

Throughout the greater part of his reign, the Court continued to blaze and dazzle with extravagant magnificence, and in the midst of it the shabby King "moved meanly"—he had forgotten "the practices suitable to his greatness."

What was this man like who, on his arrival, was "almost adored" by Englishmen? It is difficult to tell. Surely no one has ever been described so often and so variously. From a sovereign of fine and stately presence, to a shambling, tottering, malformed oddity —through every shade that lies between those two extremes, the descriptions waver. Nor are his portraits any help, for no two are alike: But beyond the enormous difference of opinion, there is another curious thing to be observed in the written description of James. The most hideous and repulsive pictures of him come from the pens of English writers, Catholic and Protestant alike.

We are assured he could scarcely walk, because his legs were so weak, that in consequence he usually entered a room with a courtier on either side of him and an arm round the neck of each. For the same reason he rarely stood upright, but lolled against a favourite. His tongue was so large for his mouth that he could never drink his wine without some of it pouring down into his lap, and one writer hints that this tongue was more often outside his mouth than in it.

But there is another point of view. The foreign

ambassadors, who were all of them Catholics and well aware of the King's dislike to, and his fear of, the spread of their religion, give far more favourable pictures. Letters, too, from Catholic Churchmen, who certainly had no cause to esteem James, join the ambassadors in representing him as a quite presentable man. Possibly the English allowed their annoyance to run away with their pens. James could hardly be called a good king; he was exceedingly extravagant, and extorted money to pay for his extravagances; his game laws were severe, and his ruin of the crops by his ceaseless hunting prodigious, and he persecuted the Catholics. None of these traits could make him a favourite with any of the different sections of society; he was, moreover, tactless, and was disliked personally as a man, as well as being unpopular as a king. And the writers who did not spare his personal appearance, did not spare his character either.

Of the views held by the favourable foreigners as to his personal appearance I have chosen as a specimen that of the Venetian Ambassador, within some four years after James' accession. It agrees in many particulars with other descriptions; it was written by a Catholic whose religious views would not bias him in James' favour, and by one, moreover, who had frequent access to the Court.

"He (James) is sufficiently tall, of a noble presence, his physical constitution robust, and he is at pains to preserve it by taking much exercise at the chase, which he passionately loves, and uses not only as a recreation but as a medicine. For this he throws off all business which he leaves to his Council and his ministers. And so one may truly say that he is sovereign in name and appearance rather than in subject and effect. This

is the result of his deliberate choice, for he is capable of governing, being a Prince of intelligence and culture above the common, thanks to his application to and pleasure in study when he was young, though he has now abandoned that pursuit altogether. He is a Protestant as it is called, that means a mixture of religions; in doctrine he is Calvinistic, but not so in politics and in policy. . . . The King is a bitter enemy of our religion . . . he frequently speaks of it in terms of contempt. . . . His Majesty is by nature placid, averse from cruelty—a lover of justice. He goes to chapel on Sundays and Tuesdays, the latter being observed by him in memory of a conspiracy of Scottish nobles in 1600.[1] He loves quiet and repose, has no inclination to war, nay is opposed to it, a fact that little pleases many of his subjects, though it pleases them still less that he leaves all government to his Council and will think of nothing but the chase. He does not caress his people nor make them that good cheer the late Queen did, whereby she won their loves; for the English adore their sovereigns, and if the King passed through the same street one hundred times a day the people would still run to see him; they like their King to show pleasure at their devotion as the late Queen knew well how to do, but this King manifests no taste for them, but rather contempt and the result is he is despised and almost hated. In fact his Majesty is more inclined to live retired with eight or ten of his favourites than openly as is the custom of the country and the desire of the people."[2]

From the above it will be seen that the wonderful popularity which James had experienced on entering the kingdom had taken only four years to ripen into bitter dislike. But, indeed, it had hardly survived the

[1] The Gowrie conspiracy is the one alluded to.

[2] Report on England by Nicolo Molin, 1607. Calendar of Venetian State Papers. Original MS. in the Marcian Library.

first months of his reign. Even before he reached London, on that his first journey of 1603, his people shouted less heartily, and murmurs of disdain and discontent mingled with their shouts. This was partly due to his dislike to be "gazed upon," and hustled by the crowd, as he frequently was in the desire to see him, and partly by the slights he countenanced, nay counselled, to the memory of the late Queen.

The memory of Elizabeth was hateful to him. How could it be otherwise? Alive or dead he had sworn not to look on her. Indeed, his journey from Berwick to London owed much of its leisure to his keen desire that Elizabeth should be buried before he could arrive in London. He would wear no mourning for her, and forbade others to do so—his first step in unpopularity.

A curious glimpse of the treatment of the dead sovereign is obtained from a letter written by Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli. He says:—

"Meantime the body of the late Queen by her own orders has neither been opened, nor indeed seen, by any living soul save by three of her ladies. It has been taken to Westminster near London, and lies there in the palace, all hung with mournings. There the Council waits on her continually with the same ceremony, the same expenditure, down to her very household and table service, as though she were not wrapped in many a fold of cere-cloth, and hid in such a heap of lead, of coffin, of pall, but was walking, as she used to do at this season, about the alleys of her gardens. And so, in accordance with ancient custom will it continue till the King gives orders for the funeral."[1]

Those orders were not long in coming. James' one desire was to hasten the matter as much as possible.

[1] From the Calendar of Venetian State Papers. Ed. H. F. Brown.

He had besides his dislike of the late Queen an unconquerable repugnance to the sight of death, and shrank from looking on it whenever possible. Refusing then his part of chief mourner, he wished to place Arabella in that position. The Doge of Venice was always well informed of affairs—aye, and of scandals—that took place in England. Just then his secretary's pen was unusually busy. On April 24th, 1603, he wrote:—

"I hear on all sides that the king is a man of letters and of business, fond of the chase and of riding, sometimes indulging in play. These qualities attract men to him and render him acceptable to the aristocracy. Besides English, he speaks Latin and French perfectly, and understands Italian quite well. His Majesty has ordered the funeral of the Queen to take place without waiting for his arrival, and they say he wishes to see her neither alive nor dead, for he can never expel from his memory the fact that his mother was put to death at the hands of the public executioner, with great disgrace and cruelty, an indignity to a crowned head that has no parallel in history except the case of Corradin . . . Elizabeth's portrait is being hidden everywhere, and Mary Stuart's shown instead with the declaration that she suffered for no other cause than for her religion. . . . It is said that the King wishes Lady Arabella to appear as the sole Princess of the blood at Elizabeth's funeral, which is being arranged for the second week in May."[1]

But there Arabella had something to say. She was as averse to attending the funeral as James himself, though from a different reason. She is reported to have said that as she had not been allowed to be

[1] From Calendar of Venetian State Papers. Original in the Archives of Venice.

about the Court and see Elizabeth in her lifetime, she refused to pay her any attention when she was dead.

All this time Arabella had been at Wrest House, awaiting with great anxiety the coming of the King, and speculating in all probability as to the treatment she was likely to receive at his hands.

The next mention we have of her is from Scaramelli on the 1st of May:—

"Lady Arabella has been released and has gone to meet the King with three hundred horse, after that she will attend the Queen's obsequies. The King is favouring all those oppressed by the late Queen. In pursuance of that policy he has named the Earl of Northumberland of the Privy Council. The Earl of Northumberland had been as it were banished from Court because his estates on the borders of Scotland near the North Sea were so great, and because the Queen had some suspicions of those intelligencies with the King of Scotland which are now apparent. The King has conferred the same honour on Lord Thomas Howard son of the late unhappy Duke of Norfolk, beheaded for being affianced to Queen Mary."[1]

A week later he forwarded to his master an account of the funeral, which had proved a stumbling-block to the consciences of all the Ambassadors save to him of France.

"This morning the body of the late Queen was committed to the tomb in the famous fane of Westminster, dedicated to S. Peter by Segbert king of the East Saxons exactly one thousand years ago. . . . The coffin will lie for a month under a catafalque, and on it is the Queen's effigy carved in wood and coloured so faithfully that she seems alive. . . . The magnifi-

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers. Ed. H. F. Brown.

cence of the ceremony consisted merely in the universal mourning worn by all the ladies and gentlemen of the Court, which cost an immense sum, but at the actual service little else was done except the chanting of two Psalms in English, and the delivery of a funeral oration, as I have been informed; for although the Council sent to me and to all representatives of Princes, as is the custom of this Kingdom, cloth to make mournings for myself and four servants which is all that we are allowed to take with us into the great crowd, and also repeatedly and cordially pressed me to be present, I declined the invitation and offered a good reason for my refusal. I did this because it was not my place to go, and also to avoid entering the church and avoid attending heretic services, and thereby causing inevitable scandal and a danger to myself. The French Ambassador expresses extreme grief, not merely on account of the relationship, but because of the long alliance which has existed between his Master and this crown. He attended the ceremony in hood and mourning cloak, whose train was more than six yards long. He not only entered the Church but was present throughout the whole ceremony, upon orders received by courier express from France in answer to the question he addressed to the King. This is contrary to the custom of French Ambassadors who since the re-benediction of the King have never taken part in church ceremonies, such as Coronation Day."[1]

James had not persisted in Arabella attending the funeral as chief mourner, and at the time she was probably absent from London. James about this date was staying at Theobalds, where a significant interview had taken place which must have caused considerable uneasiness to those courtiers who had aided Essex's downfall. For at Theobalds the King gave a most

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

gracious reception to the twelve-year-old son of Elizabeth's favourite, who, had he lived, would probably have occupied a similar position to her successor. James took the boy in his arms and kissed him warmly, loudly declaring him the son of the most noble knight England had ever begotten. He then appointed the boy to bear the sword before him at his coronation and announced his determination of making him the life-long companion of his own elder son. Elizabeth the Queen was buried out of sight, nothing remained to prevent James continuing his journey southwards, and in a very few days he was settled at the Palace of Greenwich.

There appears to have been some little doubt at first in the King's mind as to his treatment of Arabella. His first suggestion was that she should return again to Wrest House,[1] but Cecil represented that this was tantamount to disgrace, and Arabella was too high-spirited not to resent it. He suggested, and James consented to the arrangement, that Arabella should stay at Sheen in charge of someone devoted to his Majesty, who would watch over her well without making her consider herself a prisoner.

That she undoubtedly did not do, as she rode over from there one Sunday to visit the King attended by a gorgeous suite. Arabella certainly possessed the gift of fascination, men were to be found later who were ready to run big risks for her sake; yet she had charmed unusually quickly, if what the following account suggests is true. The Venetian Secretary speaks of her visit, of her return to royal favour, a favour so marked that he feels impelled to inform the grave Doge, his Master, that "they say should the

[1] Bradley, *Life of Arabella Stuart.*

Queen die, she (Arabella) would be wedded and crowned at once."[1] One may be sure that it was current gossip, the Venetian was avid of it,—fortunately for the student of history—and reported all his gleanings to the Doge. Strange that diplomatic correspondence should have been burdened by so many trivialities. But possibly the last report sprang from the rumours of the recent illness of the Queen, and the desirability of uniting two claims, one of which might at any moment run counter to the other.

Be that as it may, Arabella was evidently no favourite of the Venetian's; he speaks of her on that same visit to Greenwich as a "regular termagant," but gives no reason for his thought, and that is the first and only instance I have come across of a word in her disfavour.

On the 27th of May Scaramelli had his first interview with James the First of England; I leave him to give his own impressions.

"I was received in audience yesterday at two o'clock, at Greenwich. I went there and found such a crowd that I never saw the like even at Constantinople in time of peace. There were upwards of ten or twelve thousand persons about. All the efforts of the guards hardly enabled me to reach the first, let alone the inner chamber, owing to the throng of nobility. At length having arrived at the chamber where the King was, I found all the Council about his chair and an infinity of other lords almost in an attitude of adoration (quasi in atto d'adorazione). His Majesty rose and took six steps towards the middle of the room, and then drew back one after making me a sign of welcome with his hand. He then remained standing up while he listened to me attentively. At the opening and at the close he held his hat in his hand for awhile. He was dressed

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

in silver grey satin, quite plain with a cloak of black tabinet reaching to below the knees and lined with crimson, he had his arm in a white sling the result of a fall from his horse when out hunting; which occasioned more danger than damage; from his dress he would have been taken for the meanest among the courtiers, a modesty he affects, had it not been for a chain of diamonds round his neck and a great diamond in his hat; they say it is the one which Don Antonio of Portugal pledged for 80,000 crowns, but is now valued at 200,000."[1]

His dress like the meanest of his courtiers—a king as wise, as great as he had no need for rich suits, they could add nothing to his value—his jewels alone were splendid, regal, worthy of him, was that his thought? It is well in keeping with his character.

And what of Anne, the new Queen, who was to play so large a part in Arabella's life and but a small one in the history of England?

Anne of Denmark at the time of her husband's accession was very nearly the same age as Arabella. She was born at Scanderberg,[2] on December 12th, 1575, and was the second daughter of Frederick the Second, King of Denmark, and of his wife Sophia, daughter of the Duke of Mecklenburg. She had been married fourteen years when she became Queen Consort of England, and in spite of constant quarrelling and many petty annoyances meted out to James, she appears to have possessed an affectionate husband. That she tried his patience greatly there is little doubt; she was peevish, ill-tempered and unreasonable. She was devoted to her children, yet her very devotion proved a dangerous

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers. Ed. H. F. Brown. Original in the Venetian Archives.

[2] Strickland's *Queens of England.*

annoyance to her husband. After the birth of their eldest son, Henry, at Stirling Castle, on February 19th, 1594, James insisted on removing him from his wife's care, and placing him under the guardianship of the Earl of Mar, who would keep him apart from his family in Stirling Castle. The post of Governor of Stirling Castle was hereditary in the Erskine (Mar) family,[1] and the care of the Scotch King's eldest son was usually undertaken by them. James the First himself had been brought up in Stirling Castle by the Countess of Mar and Sir Alexander Erskine, and his favourite playmate had been the Earl of Mar, then a boy eight years older than the King. Indeed, the old Countess of Mar, James' former *gouvernante*, was to be inducted into the same office for Henry. James would see no reason why his son should not be brought up as he had been, and indeed would see every reason for him to be placed as soon as possible under trustworthy guardianship. On several previous occasions in Scotland it had happened that a faction disaffected to the king would obtain possession of the heir and use him to destroy the father. All this was carefully and many times explained to Anne, who, however, would much have preferred to risk sacrificing her husband, to being without her son. She never ceased to make both overt and covert attempts to obtain possession of the little Prince. Once her husband had started for England, she (immediately after a very affectionate parting from him) made her most determined attempt. Utterly unable to cope with her, harassed with her upbraidings and hysterics, the Earl of Mar sent after James for further orders. The first few weeks of the King's progress through his new kingdom were marked

[1] See the *Scottish Nation.*

[Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.

ANNE OF DENMARK.

(National Portrait Gallery.)

by the hurrying to and fro of courtiers bearing angry, abusive letters, stern commands and anxious pleadings. Eventually Anne obtained her own way, and removing Henry from the charge of the obnoxious Mar bore him in triumph with her to England.

In spite of her passionate temper and fits of childish petulance her affections were most tenacious, and those whom she once liked she never deserted. Her kindness to one of her maids of honour, Beatrice Ruthven, is an example. Beatrice, after the castrophe of the Gowrie plot, which involved her as well as her relatives in ruin, was forced to leave the Court and for a time found herself nearly destitute. She owed the alleviation of her misery to Anne, who acted in this matter in direct opposition to her husband's wishes.

On the 2nd of June, 1603, she set out to join the King in England.

"On leaving Edinburgh, the Queen generously distributed among the ladies who remained behind, all the jewels, dresses and hangings of her rooms, everything she had without exception, and declared with tears in her eyes that if she had had more she would have given it. In the late Queen's wardrobe she will find six thousand dresses, and though she declared she would never wear cast clothes, still it was found that art could not devise anything more costly and gorgeous, and so the Court dressmakers are at work altering these old robes, for nothing new could surpass them."[1]

The number sounds impossible, yet there is still a list[2] extant of her wardrobe in 1600, not including State robes, such as Garter and Coronation ones, which, even if it does not come up to the number given by the

[1] Venetian Secretary to the Doge and Senate. Ven. State Papers.

[2] Fairholt, *Eng. Costumes.*

Secretary, would certainly provide a large selection for Queen Anne.

Robes, 99.	Petticoats, 125.
French Gowns, 102.	Round Gowns, 67.
Loose Gowns, 100.	Cloaks, 96.
Kirtles, 126.	Cloaks and Safeguards, 31.
Foreparts, 136[1]	Safeguards, 13.[2]
Lap Mantles, 18.	Safeguards and Jupes, 43.
Doublets, 85.	

The custom of presenting New Year's gifts to the sovereign had greatly helped to plenish Elizabeth's wardrobe. These gifts were from every class and of every kind. Nothing was unacceptable to the Queen, from a costly jewel to a present of spices. "Foreparts and Sleeves" seem to have been very usual gifts to her, and were doubtless greatly appreciated. But if Anne availed herself of Elizabeth's gowns at first, it is very improbable that she did so for long. Two or three years later a commission was given to various ladies to ransack the late Queen's wardrobe in the Tower and to select such dresses as they pleased, to be used by the Court for one of the Queen's masques.

However, the altered dresses and some jewels were sent to Berwick to meet Anne in charge of certain ladies whom James had asked her to include in her household. But with the exception of Lady Bedford and Lady Harrington Anne absolutely refused to appoint any of them. Whether her refusal arose from a determination to retain her Scottish household, from dislike to the Englishwomen, or from a desire to embarrass the King, it is not easy to say. But if the latter was her motive, she ably fulfilled it.

[1] Probably the panel of the skirt, which differed in colour and material.
[2] Overskirts worn to protect the dress.

Their elder daughter Elizabeth accompanied her mother and brother into England. She was only seven years old at the time, having been born in 1596. A curious godmother was chosen for her, none other than the City of Edinburgh, which rather unsuitably was represented at the baptism by the Provost. For many years nothing is heard of the little Princess at Court, as she spent her childhood at Coombe Abbey, near Coventry, in the charge of Lord and Lady Harrington. There is a pretty account[1] in a diary, said to have been written by a contemporary, of Arabella's meeting with the Queen and Princess Elizabeth, and it seems sad that it should most probably be untrue. For the meeting is said to have taken place in Nottinghamshire, where the Queen undoubtedly was from June 15th–23rd,[2] but unfortunately Arabella wrote several letters from Sheen to Cecil between June 14th and June 30th,[3] which it is impossible she could have done if she had been in Nottinghamshire at the time.

The pageant was, however, conceived very much in the spirit of the time, and may very probably have been presented at one of the great houses along the Queen's route. It is an excellent specimen of the type of "fancies" offered to royal guests.

"One day as we were coming down a hill in Nottinghamshire, we perceived a great company, which as we drew near, appeared like what you have read of the shepherds and shepherdesses of Arcadia. One band was of young women dressed all in white, with garlands on their heads, and on their arms baskets of flowers, which they strewed along the road, followed

[1] See Strickland. It is quoted from the MS. diary of a Court lady, and is supposed to have been written in after years. This might account for the mistake in including Arabella.

[2] Mr. Bradley, *Life of Arabella Stuart.* [3] See *ante.*

by young men clad also in white, and playing on the tabor, pipe, and all kinds of rustic instruments, leading a flock of sheep, whose wool was white as snow. Cornucopias, and other emblems of peace and plenty were carried by several of the party, singing in chorus in praise of the royal family, and of the blessings of peace, which their advent was to secure to the whole island. A troop of huntsmen arrayed in green and silver, came next, conducting a herd of tame deer, with their horns tipped with gold. These swains told us that Diana, hearing of the Queen's approach, was coming to invite her to repose herself in one of her retreats. They hardly ended their speech, which was in verse, when we heard the sound of bugles from a neighbouring wood, out of which we saw several beautiful girls advance attired like nymphs; and last of all appeared Diana, that is a lady representative of the goddess, who proved to be the Lady Arabella Stuart, daughter to Charles, Earl of Lennox, younger brother to the King's father."

What impression did Anne of Denmark make on the brilliant Court she was hastening to? Apparently not an unfavourable one, if one may trust the following sketch of her, companion to the one of her husband given earlier in this chapter.

"The Queen is very gracious, moderately good-looking. She is a Lutheran. The king tried to make her a Protestant; others a Catholic, and this she was and is much inclined to, hence the rumours that she is one. She likes enjoyment and is very fond of dancing and fêtes. She is intelligent and prudent; and knows the disorders of the government, in which she has no part, though many hold that as the king is most devoted to her, she might play as large a rôle as she wished. But she is young and averse to trouble. She sees that those who govern desire to be left alone,

and so she professes indifference. All she ever does is to beg a favour for someone. She is full of kindness for those who support her, but on the other hand she is terrible, proud, unendurable to those she dislikes."[1]

The journey of the Queen and her children, tedious in itself, was redeemed by many of those dramatic fêtes the Queen so dearly loved; by the gorgeous receptions and gifts of loyal towns, and by the novelty of all their surroundings. So they passed on through England in the golden summer days, until at last, "on July 10th, the Queen arrived at Windsor with two hundred and fifty carriages and upwards of five thousand horses, her retinue having grown greatly on her journey. She was received by the King and Court with every mark of honour."[2]

Meantime Arabella was busying herself with urging the King to give her a settled income. The King was always coy when it came to settling money upon others, and Arabella had recourse to Cecil to keep him to his promises.

"To the right hon. my very good lord the Lord Cecil.

"My good Lord,

"It hath pleased his Majesty to alter his purpose concerning the pension whereof your Lordship writ to me. It may please you to move his Majesty that my present want may be supplied by his highness by some sum of money which needeth not be annual if it shall so seem good to his Majesty. But I would rather make hard shift for the present than to be too troublesome to his highness, who I doubt not will allow me maintenance in such liberal sort as shall be for his Majesty's honour, and a testimony to the world no less of his

[1] Report on England by Nicolo Molin, Ambassador from Venice. Calendar of Venetian State Papers. 1607.

[2] Calendar of Venetian State Papers. 1603

highness' princely bounty than natural affection to me. Which good intention of his Majesty's I doubt not but your Lordship will further as you shall see occasion whereby your Lordship shall make me greatly bounden unto you as I already acknowledge myself to be. And so with humble thanks for your honourable letter I recommend your Lordship to the protection of the Almighty who send you all honour and contentment.

"From Sheen the 22nd of June.

"Your Lordship's poor friend

"ARABELLA STUART."[1]

"My good Lord,

"I humbly thank your Lordship that it will please you among your great affairs to remember my suit to his Majesty. For the alteration of my pension I shall shortly have the means to acquaint your Lordship with it myself. If I should name two thousand pounds for my present occasion it would not exceed my necessity, but I dare not presume to crave any certain sum, but refer myself wholly to his Majesty's consideration, and assure myself I shall find your Lordship my honourable good friend both in procuring it as soon and making the sum as great as may be. So with humble thanks to your Lordship for your continual favours I recommend your Lordship to the protection of the Almighty.

"From Sheen the 23rd of June 1603.

"Your Lordship's poor friend

"ARBELLA STUART.

"To the right hon. my very good lord the Lord Cecil."[2]

But the matter was to drag on for some time before Arabella was to be satisfied.

[1] Ashmole MSS. June 22nd, 1603.
[2] Ashmole MSS. 1603.

By the 28th of August the King had decided what position she should occupy at his Court.

"Lady Arabella has been summoned to Court and placed near the King and Queen as a Princess of the Blood; in her appointments, table and rank she takes precedence of all other ladies at Court. She has already begun to bear her Majesty's train when she goes to chapel. For the rest she is living very retired, nor is there wanting a certain mystery in the situation."[1]

The mystery apparently died a natural death, as there is no mention of it again, but most probably Arabella had been urged by the prudent Cecil and by the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury then at Court, not to repeat her former mistake of thrusting herself into too great prominence lest she should encounter the King's jealousy. Moreover, she had by that time received Cobham's letter and learned of the conspiracy it portended, which is referred to later, and had possibly been somewhat frightened by it, and seen the wisdom of not arousing the King's fears.

The old Dowager of Shrewsbury had remained in the North and not ventured to Court, where her presence would have been an unpleasant reminder to the King of the captivity of his mother.

Nor did the Earl and Countess stay very long in the South; some time in the summer they started northwards, leaving Arabella secure in her new position and with many directions as to her conduct.

Earl Gilbert certainly did his best to guide his impulsive relative aright, and she never resented his interference in her affairs as she occasionally did that of his wife. Indeed, Arabella and Gilbert were sworn friends, and the letters that passed between them show

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

very little of the formality that usually existed even between relatives at that time.

Very soon after the Earl's departure Arabella wrote to him from Farnham.

"I humbly thank you for your letter to my Lord Chamberlain Sidney on my behalf, which I have not yet delivered, and for letting me understand your course, which, though it bend directly northward, will not hinder you from thinking and looking to the South, where you leave me to take my fortune in an unknown climate, without either art or instruction but what I have from you, whose skilful directions I will observe as far forth as they are most puritan-like. And though I be very frail, I must confess, yet I think you shall see in me the good effects of your prayers, and your great glory for reforming my untowardly resolutions and merits (for great shall the melancholy be that shall appear in my letters to you), which is the best preservative of health I recommend to you, to whom I wish long life, honour and all happiness.

"Farnham, the 14th of August. 1603.

"Your disciple

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

[1] Ashmole MSS., 4164, f. 177.

CHAPTER VI

HOWEVER much James marvelled at the luxury that met him everywhere in England and the ostentatious display of power and wealth to which his nobles urged him, he was able to show himself such an apt pupil that in a short time he had outstripped his teachers.

They had adored him, they had made a god of him; he rapidly decided that he could do no wrong.

"All these changes the King carries out in that high-handed manner which was recommended to him by the English lords themselves. . . . While advancing the Scotch and those English to whom he says he is under obligation, the King shows small regard for the rest. . . . And as he is seen every day to deprive someone of his office, and never lets a day pass without lamenting that his mother's head fell, at the third stroke, by a villanous deed, all those who, even by relationship are stained with that blood, grow fearful, not merely lest they should lose their appointments, but lest their end be a bloody one. To the people and private nobility he endeavours to give every satisfaction in general terms . . . he by royal proclamation announces many reforms for the general weal and the alleviation of the poor; but above all he professes strict justice, and so wherever he goes he is received with cheers and plaudits."[1]

It was not long before those died away and the people

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

quickly recognized how much greater was James' love for words than for deeds.

Very soon the industrious Venetian reports:—

"The King is by nature of a mild disposition and has never really been happy in Scotland . . . he desires to have no bother with other people's affairs and little with his own; he would like to dedicate himself to his books and to the chase and to encourage the opinion that he is the real arbiter of peace."[1]

James was beginning the course which was to end a year or two later by England being governed by the Council, while the King spent ten months of the year in the country, refusing to trouble with his people's affairs, trampling down their harvests, and declining to read their petitions.

James was as happy with his new possessions as a child with new toys and very desirous to see all those palaces which now belonged to him. Shortly after the Queen's arrival he was to have an excellent reason for doing so, and both he and the Court were by late summer to lead an almost fugitive existence, flying from the "Black Death." The plague, that scourge from which in older times Europe was never quite free, had appeared in England with extraordinary violence. In the middle of May Scaramelli had written to the Doge:

"The plague progresses . . . as the day is nineteen hours long here and the season unusually hot, there is a dread of the disease spreading, especially as no steps have been taken as yet, except to kill the dogs and mark the houses by fastening a great printed paper with the words 'Lord have mercy upon us.'"[1]

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

The precaution Scaramelli mentions of killing the dogs was a very general one in plague times. The dogs were usually strays, or those allowed to wander by themselves in the street.

"That if any house within this city shall happen to be infected with the plague that then every person to keep within his or her house every his or her dog, and not to suffer them to go at large: and if any dog shall be then abroad at large it shall be lawful for the beadle or any other person to kill the same dog. And that any owner of such dog going at large shall lose 6/- to be levied and divided as aforesaid."[1]

And during the prevalence of the plague an entry was made in the churchwardens' accounts of St. Margaret's, Westminster: "6/8 paid to Robert Wells, June 19, for killing four score dogs."[2] This man was subsequently paid for killing forty-two more in the course of the summer at the rate of one penny for each animal. Such a remedy did not appear to be very efficacious, as shortly after the King's accession three thousand three hundred persons died in one week within the liberties of London.

Camden estimated that from December, 1602, to December, 1603, thirty thousand five hundred and seventy-eight persons died of the plague.

The most ordinary precautions were usually neglected until the disease had gained too much ground for any headway to be made against it. Indeed it seemed often to be hardly noticed until possibly whole streets were devastated and by their air of fearful loneliness struck terror into the hearts of the people who up till then had refused to recognize the plague's existence.

[1] See an interesting little book, *Archives of Winchester*, by C. Bailey.
[2] Nichol.

But the King at least was very much afraid, and as the spread of the epidemic was attributed to the vast concourse of people thronging the city to see the new King, he issued on the 29th of May, 1603, a proclamation to gentlemen to abstain from going to Court. The Venetian Secretary adds in June that all gentlemen not immediately in attendance at Court had been ordered to return home to the country till after the August rains.

Public ceremonies, too, were greatly hindered, but at first that did not appear to be thought of, as active preparations were begun for the Coronation.

"The coronation is put off till the 5th of August, the Feast of St. James, the King's name day. Until that date the King will not make his entry into London, but will merely take possession of the Tower, according to ancient usage as representing the throne and royal seats, for it holds the Treasury and the Armoury that are the very forces of the kingdom. Until his coronation he will occupy the royal residences and pleasure houses in the neighbourhood of London. . . . The object of all this is to make one entry, one coronation and consequently one single expenditure. . . . But the drain on private purses is enormous, to such an extent that even the smaller members of the Council, the lesser peers and gentlemen, appear in public with forty or fifty pack horses and some with teams of horses to the number of one two or three hundred horses with double sets of livery, one for the valletaille, and the other for the gentlemen of the suites. They keep open house, as is the custom of this country; the table is always laid, one may say with abundance of provisions. . . . The assembly at Court amounts to upwards of forty thousand persons of all conditions, and it is held for certain that by the date of the

Coronation there will be more than one hundred thousand extra mouths in London."[1]

These crowds were greatly increased by the enormous suites with which the Ambassadors-Extraordinary, sent to congratulate the King upon his accession, thought fit to travel. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1603 these expensive guests were continually arriving. James welcomed them with open arms and sought to dazzle them with his newly acquired magnificence.

"The French Ambassador on Sunday last dined with the King in State. His Majesty made a vast display of plate, and on his person a wealth of jewels."[1]

This Ambassador was the great minister Rosny, and he appears to have been considerably surprised at the state maintained by James. The King, during Rosny's visit, was served by kneeling attendants—a custom he afterwards, at any rate partially, discontinued—and this astonished the minister not a little.

But the enjoyment of the first few months of his reign was marred to James by the steady increase of the plague. By July it had become so severe that all thoughts of a state entry into the city had to be abandoned and the Coronation was shorn of much of its splendour.

"The coronation will take place at the appointed time, but in very private form. The king will cross the Thames from Lambeth to Westminster and will return the same way without touching London. The arches and trophies will be used on the occasion of his solemn opening of Parliament in October if the plague stops."[1]

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

But at the end of July the plague appeared at Windsor, and the Court started for Hampton Court Palace. But before reaching there the King and Queen took Prince Henry and Princess Elizabeth to Oatlands, where Prince Henry was to live.

A few days later Scaramelli paid his homage to the two children and has left a quaint description of them both.

"I have visited the Princes at Oatlands, to the great satisfaction of themselves, the King and Queen. The Prince is ten years old, little of body and quick of spirit. He is ceremonious beyond his years, and with great gravity he covered and bade me be covered. Through an interpreter he gave me a long discourse on his exercises, dancing, tennis, the chase. He then himself conducted me down one flight of stairs and up another to meet the Princess. I found her surrounded by her Court under a canopy. They both said they meant to learn Italian."[1]

This ceremonious little boy when he grew older became a great friend and admirer of Arabella, and the two were often together.

Shortly after the Secretary's visit came the Coronation, seen by but a few, so surrounded was it by precautions.

"On Monday morning, St. James' Day, the King embarked on the Thames, accompanied by the Council and both Courts, and landed at the ancient church of Westminster, where land access was forbidden by a strong body of guards placed at the gates of London, while on the water it was the penalty of death to bring people in boats from the city."[1]

The King walked under a canopy supported by four rods, from the top of each hung a silver-gilt bell.

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

He was preceded by fifteen Earls, and wore the same robes that they did, with the sole difference of a rather richer tippet. The costume consisted of a tabard of crimson velvet, a mantle of the same lined with ermine, a crimson velvet tippet lined with ermine, a crimson velvet hood hanging over the tippet "like a stocking," and a cap of crimson velvet and fillet of ermine. The Queen also wore a long robe of crimson velvet lined with ermine "without other adornment, simply girt." She had her hair down and a crown of plain gold on her head. Her Court was also in crimson velvet.

It can hardly have been a very cheerful procession; the weather was bad, and the knowledge that behind the belt of guards lay a death-stricken city, which in this summer alone lost a fourth part of its inhabitants, was not inspiriting.

As Arabella was the Queen's chief lady it is to be supposed that she attended the Coronation, but if she did there is no account left of the service from her pen. It must have been a curious moment for Arabella when she saw the crown of England placed on her cousin's head, a crown which at one time of her life she had been taught to think would be her own.

After the ceremony of crowning, James was led to the throne, and then followed a curious incident.

"Then the Earls, Councils and Barons one by one kissed the King's hand, kneeling before him on a red brocaded cushion, and touched the crown, some even kissing it. The Earl of Pembroke,[1] a handsome youth, who is always with the King and always joking with him, actually kissed his Majesty's face, whereupon the King laughed and gave him a little cuff."[2]

[1] This youth became the Earl of Shrewsbury's son-in-law.

[2] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

After this ceremony had taken place the Queen was crowned.

"They then retired to some chambers behind the altar and the King exchanged his crown for a lighter one, and the Queen doffed her red crimson mantle and remained in black. They took some refreshments and then they went back in the same order as that in which they arrived, and having gone on board a barge royally furnished, they made show of themselves for a space on the river, and then retired to the palace, where they have lain till this evening, when their Majesties and the Council went back to Hampton Court."[1]

This palace was the largest of the eight royal residences lying upon the banks of the Thames. "The furnishings of the royal apartments are the richest that the Crown possess. Each of the eight palaces has its own furniture, which is never taken to furnish another."

Speaking of Hampton Court, Scaramelli made an odd statement about it, which throws considerable light on the simplicity of the requirements of James' day. "They say that Hampton Court has one thousand eight hundred inhabitable rooms, or at least, *all of them with doors that lock.*"

With such a wealth of doors that could be locked, small wonder that James felt the greatest king in Christendom!

On Wednesday, the 10th of August, the King and Queen, accompanied by Arabella and an enormous Court, began their first regular progress, which ended only on the 22nd of September. Both James and Anne were very fond of these long, leisurely journeys,

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

made the more leisurely by endless digressions for the chase. But few, whether of the Court or the people, shared the royal pleasure. The additional expenditure rendered necessary by these journeys well-nigh ruined many of the courtiers. The fatigues of travelling were very great, and the accommodation provided for the rest of the Court left nearly everything to be desired. As to the people, when the novelty of seeing their King had staled, they discovered that his incessant hunting ruined their land and destroyed their crops, that the enormous Court accompanying him laid waste their district as a horde of locusts might have done, consuming every sort of provision that could be obtained for many miles, only passing on when all resources came to an end. Added to this, in 1603, was the plague-infection spread by the Court, which coming from London and other infected areas, brought with it many in whom the fatal germs were already active.

Arabella, with the heavy expenses that this mode of life entailed upon her and her very small resources, was thankful when she at last got the King to promise her a settled maintenance. On the 16th of August she wrote the news to her aunt:—

"Madame,

"If you receive the letters I write, I am sure you will see I fail not to write often how the world goeth here both in intelligence with me and otherwise as far as my intelligence stretcheth. Wherefore I rather interpret your post script to be a caveat to me to write no more than I do, and my desire to understand of your health, that is no more than is necessary, than a new commandment to do that which I already do. But lest in pleasing you I offend my uncle, I have adventured to write to him one superfluous letter more,

and that I may include no serious matter in his, I send you all I have of that kind, which is that the king hath under his hand granted me the aforesaid mess of meat and £800 per annum; and my Lord Cecil will despatch it I trust, with all speed, for so his lordship promiseth. Your long expected messenger, by whom I should have understood your mind, is not yet come, and the Queen is going hence to-morrow, but the change of place will not cease my expectation, till I understand from you, you have changed your mind in that matter, which, if you do, I shall hope it is with a mind to come up shortly and let me know it yourself, according to a bruit we have here which I would fain believe.

"You shall not fail to receive weekly letters God willing, unless lack of health or means or some other great occasion hinder me. Mr. Elphinstone, who you may see is with me late as well as early, remembers his service to you. And so I humbly take my leave praying the Almighty to send you all honour, happiness, and contentment etc.

"Your Ladyship's niece to command,

"ARABELLA STUART."[1]

But Arabella's knowledge of the King's character was not very deep as yet, and a few days later her jubilance was sadly overcast. She promptly appeals to her uncle Gilbert, who was a great friend of Cecil's.

"Madame,

"I have written to my uncle how the world goes with me, I beseech you get him to write to my Lord Cecil on my behalf, and to take notice of his and my Lord H. Howard's crossing the King's intention for my allowance of diet.

"I think that makes others deny me that the King granted and makes even himself think anything enough, when so wise counsellors think it too much.

[1] Add. MSS., British Museum, 4164, f. 177, 178.

You know his inclination to be kind to all his kin, and liberal to all he loves, and you know his protestations of extraordinary affection to me. Therefore I am sure it is evil counsel that withholds him so long from doing for me in as liberal sort as he hath done for any. The Queen was very desirous to have accompanied the King. When she speaks of you, she speaks very kindly and honourably of you. Our great and gracious ladies leave no gesture nor fault of the late Queen unremembered, as they say who are partakers of their talk, as I thank God I am not.

"Mr. Elphinstone is my very good friend, and your much devoted. I pray you let me hear of my faults from you, when you will have me mend them, for I am sure you shall hear of them there, and neither those faults which are thought so here, nor those qualities good that are most gracious here. Now you are a bystander, you may judge and direct better than ever. I humbly take my leave, praying the Almighty to send you all happiness.

"From Basing. the 23rd of August. 1603,

"Your ladyship's niece to command,

"ARBELLA STUART.

"I beseech you commend me to my uncle Charles and my aunt and all my cousins with you. Sir William Stuart remembereth his service to you and my uncle."[1]

Cecil's reluctance very probably arose from anxiety, as, writing a few days afterwards to the Earl of Shrewsbury to assure him that Arabella had without any further difficulty obtained her income and her diet, he complains of the fearful expenditure of the King, who was spending not only the amount the late Queen had spent, but as much again.

James, to raise money, was by this time *selling* knighthoods, which possibly accounts for the enormous

[1] Cooper.

number created. But James at the commencement of his reign was in any case very fond of bestowing honours. In this he was the very reverse of his predecessor. Elizabeth had been extraordinarily difficult when it came to creating fresh peers. In her time the nobility had been small in number, but great in importance and wealth. But after their rapid multiplication by James they were found, though doubled in numbers, to be reduced to one half in dignity and wealth.[1]

At his Coronation James had created Cecil Baron Essingdon, and granted as well as elevated a great number of other peerages. He carried this so far that one day a pasquinade was found written up in Paul's Walk announcing an art very necessary to assist weak memories in remembering the names of the new nobility. No wonder that at the beginning of August the Venetian Secretary wrote that James having created seven hundred knights since his succession intended to make one thousand in imitation of King Arthur, who created that number among those who had attended him to battle.

James, following in the footsteps of Arthur, presents a ludicrous picture.

During September the Court spent some days at Woodstock. How Lord Cecil appreciated the royal progress is shown in a comical account[2] which he sent to Lord Shrewsbury of his unhappy holiday.

"My L. rather to keep open a current than for any matter of weight I write now, for our matters of state keep yet their wonted terms. Our treaty is not yet begun for the Spanish Ambassador hath yet not had his audience by reason that ye Plague fell in his house.

[1] *Life of James I.* R. Chambers. [2] Costello.

[*F. Hermann.*

ROBERT CECIL, EARL OF SALISBURY.

(From an old print.)

On Sunday he comes to receive it at Winchester, where the King means to lie as long as ye Plague can escape us, which drives us (? up) and down so round as I think we shall come to York. God bless the King; for once a week one or other dies in our Tents.[1] This place is unwholesome, all ye house standing upon springs. It is unsavoury for there is no savour but of cows and pigs. It is uneasefull for only ye King and Queen with ye Privy Chamber Ladies and some three or four of ye Scottish Councillors are lodged in ye house, and neither Chamberlain, nor one English Councillor, have a room, which will be a sour sauce to some of your old friends that have been merry with you in a winter's night from whence they have not removed to their beds in a snow storm."[2]

But the Shrewsburys had another active correspondent about the Court besides Cecil and Arabella.

William Fowler was Master of Requests and Secretary to Queen Anne, and was a son of that Thomas Fowler to whom the Dowager Lady Lennox had entrusted those jewels which were destined for Arabella. Probably it was in this connection that Fowler had come under the notice of the Shrewsburys. A well-meaning and faithful servant to the Queen, a great admirer of Arabella's, he was unfortunate in not possessing that great safeguard, the sense of the ridiculous. There is something of the spirit of Malvolio in his letter.

"May it please your Honour to pardon the delay I have used in deferring to answer your Lordship's most courteous letter; which growing from no other occasion but from great desire to give both your Ho. complete contentment and satisfaction, I trust that both your Ho. will afford me a gracious and courteous

[1] Many of the inferior attendants who followed the Court were lodged in tents near the Palace gates, especially the stablemen and those kitchen servants deputed to receive the provisions brought in by the country people.

[2] Dated Sept., 1603.

remission. True it is that I did, with all respect present your Ho' humble duties to her Mat^ie^, who not only lovingly accepted of them but did demand me if I had not letters from your H. which being excused by me, through your reverent regard toward her avoiding always presumption and importunity, answered, that in case your H. had written unto her she should have returned your answer in the same manner; and with these I had commission to assure both your H. of her constant affection towards you, both now in absence as also in time coming; so that your Lordship shall do well to continue her purchased affection, by such officious insinuations, which will be thankfully embraced; to the which if I may give or bring any increase I shall think me happy in such occasion or occurrences to serve and honour you.

"But I fear I am too saucy and over-bold to trouble your Honours; yet I cannot forbear from giving you advertisement of my great and good fortune in obtaining the acquaintance of my Lady Arbella who may be, to the first seven, the eight wonder of the world. If I durst I would write more plainly my opinion of things that fall out here among us but I dare not without your Lordship's warrant deal so. I send two sonnets unto my most virtuous and honourable Lady, the expression of my humour, and the honour of her whose sufficient perfections, merit more regard than this ungrateful and depressing age would afford or suffer. The one is a conceit of mine drawn from a horologe; the other is of that worthy and most virtuous Lady your niece. I trust they shall find favour in your sight and, in this hope humbly taking my leave of both your Ho. I commit your Lordship to the protection of God.

"From Woodstock the 11th. of September. 1603.

"Your H' most willing to do you service

"FOWLER."[1]

[1] Lodge's *Illustrations.*

An apparently customary adjunct of the finished courtier of past centuries was a capability, which seems quite unusual in the present day, of writing verse. If Nature had kindly granted them the voice with which to sing their poems to the—for the moment—queens of their hearts, so much the better. But if not, the poesy "writ fair" did well enough, and it is noteworthy that though the worthy dame might deny a voice, the power of making poetry (?) was always there, and appeared quite independent of Nature. It was even taught, this writing of verse, and perhaps the master may have considered Mr. William Fowler an apt pupil. Who knows? At all events, here is the little "conceit" he laid in form, as he terms it, of a sonnet, at Arabella's feet. And after reading it, few will be prepared to deny that Nature has generally very little to do with such poets.

"To the most virtuous & truly honourable Lady,
Lady Arabella Stuart.

Whilst organs of vain sense transport the mind,
Embracing objects both of sight and ear,
Touch, smell, and taste to which frail flesh inclin'd,
Prefers such trash to things which are more dear.
Thou goodly nymph, possesst with heavenly fear,
Divine in soul, devout in life and grave,
Rapt from thy sense & sex, thy spirit doth steer
Toys to avoid which reason doth bereave.
O graces rare! which time from shame shall save,
Wherein thou breathest (as in the seas doth fish,
In salt not saltish) exempt from the grave
Of sad remorse, the lot of worldling's wish.
O ornament both of thyself & sex!
And mirror bright where virtue doth reflex.

In salo sine sale."

It is a wonderful composition! It seems to say so much. Few women surely are complimented to the extent of being compared to a composition of mirror

and nymph, with the additional attribute of being able to breathe with as easy a grace as a fish. It is sad that the recipient of this artificial product, outcome of probably expensive lessons, was apparently quite unable to reflect anything satisfactory to Mr. William Fowler.

Shortly after this Arabella herself sent a budget of Court news to the Shrewsburys.

"At my return from Oxford where I spent this day whilst my Lo. Cecil amongst many more weighty affairs was despatching some of mine, I found my cousin Lacy had disburdened himself at my chamber of the charge he had from you and straight fell to prepare his for hindering his back return to-morrow morning as he intended.

"I writ to you of the delay of Taxis[1] audience, it remaineth to tell you how jovially he behaveth himself in the interim. He hath brought great store of Spanish gloves, hawks' hoods, leather for jerkins and moreover a perfumer; these delicacies he bestoweth amongst our Ladies and Lords, I will not say with a hope to effeminate the one sex, but certainly with a hope to grow gracious with the other as he already is. The curiosity of our sex drew many Ladies and gentlewomen to gaze at him betwixt his Landing place and Oxford his abiding place; which he desirous to satisfy, (I will not say nourish that vice) made his coach stay and took occasion with pelting gifts and courtesies to win soon-won affections, who comparing his manners with Monsieur de Rosny's hold him their far wellcomer guest. At Oxford he took some distaste about his lodging and would needs lodge at an inn because he had not all Christ's College to himself, and was not received into the town by the Vice Chancellor 'in pontificalibus,' which they never use to do but to the King or Queen or Chancellor of the University, as they say, but those scruples were soon digested, and

[1] The Spanish Ambassador.

he vouchsafeth to lodge in a piece of the College till his repair to the King at Winchester.

"Count Aremberg[1] was here within these few days, and presented to the Queen; the Archduke and the Infanta's pictures, most excellently drawn. Yesterday the King and Queen dined at a Lodge[2] of Sir Henry Lee's, three miles hence, and were accompanied by the French Ambassador[3] and a Dutch Duke; I will not say we were merry at the Dutchkin, lest you complain of me for telling tales out of the Queen's coach; but I could find in my heart to write unto you some of our yesterday's adventures, but that it groweth late, and by the shortness of your letter I conjecture you would not have this honest gentleman over-laden with such superfluous relations. My Lord Admiral is returned from the Prince and Princess, and either is or will be my cousin before incredulous you will believe such incongruities in a Councillor[4] as love maketh no miracles in his subjects, of what degree or age soever. His daughter of Kildare[5] is discharged of her office, and as near a free woman as may be and have a bad husband. The Dutch Lady my Lo. Wotton spoke of at Basing, proved a Lady sent by the Duchess of Holstein to learn the English fashions. She lodgeth at Oxford and hath been here twice and thinketh every day long till she be at home, so well liketh she her entertainment, or loveth her own country; in truth she is civil, and therefore cannot but look for the like which she brings out of a ruder country. But even if there were such a virtue as courtesy at the Court, I marvel what is become of it, for I protest I see little or none of

[1] Envoy of the Archduke of Austria.

[2] Ditchley, where the first Earl of Lichfield afterwards built a magnificent house.

[3] De Rosny.

[4] Charles, Lord Howard of Effingham, afterwards Earl of Nottingham.

[5] Frances Howard, second daughter of above. Widow of Henry Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, lately married to Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham.

it but in the Queen, who ever since her coming to Newbury hath spoken to the people and receiveth their prayers with thanks and thankful countenance, barefaced[1] to the great contentment of native and foreign people; for I would not have you think the French Ambassador leaveth that attractive virtue of our late Queen Elizabeth unremembered or uncommended, when he saw it imitated by our most gracious Queen, lest you should think we infect even our neighbours with incivility.

"But what a theme have rude I gotten unawares. It is your own virtue I commend by the foil of the opposite vice; and so, thinking on you, my pen accused myself before I was aware. Therefore I will put it to silence for this time, only adding a short but most hearty prayer for your prosperity in all kinds and so humbly take my leave.

"From Woodstock the 16th. of September.

"Your Lo' niece

"ARBELLA STUART."[2]

Just previously to this, at the end of August, the Queen had received a large number of valuable jewels from the King, an income of 40,000 crowns a year, and the palace of Nonsuch. This palace was considered unparalleled for magnificence and beauty, a fact to which it probably owed its name. It was partially built by Henry the Eighth, but being unfurnished at his death, was sold by Mary to the Earl of Arundel, on whose death it reverted again to the Crown. It was surrounded by beautiful gardens; the palace and park covered six thousand acres. "It is built with so much splendour and elegance that it stands a monument of art, and you would think the whole science of architecture expended on the building."[3]

[1] i.e. without a mask.

[2] Talbot Papers. Quoted by Lodge.

[3] Camden.

The plague having attacked a groom of the wardrobe in Prince Henry's service, he was removed from Oatlands to Nonsuch.

By this time the plague in London was thought to have improved slightly, the weekly death-rate being less by two hundred. As, however, even with this improvement, the daily death-rate was three hundred, there could be little hope of returning to London. "The terror is all the greater, for they will bury the dead to the sound of the parish bells and no steps are taken about the sick, except to close the infected houses and commend them to the mercy of God." [1]

By the 10th of September the Lieutenant of the Tower feared for his prisoners, who up to then had escaped the infection. On the 11th the King bestirred himself to give strict orders that no one was to leave London. This precaution came far too late. John Hervey, a servant of the Earl of Shrewsbury's, wrote that he could get no lodgings other than inns within ten miles of London, nor dare he venture within four or five miles of Highgate as the infection was so great. "The plague follows the Court. Two of the Queen's household are dead. People are well and merry and dead and buried the same day."[1]

Strange that they could be merry!

By the 28th of September the note had changed.

"The King and Council begin to feel deeply this scourge of the plague which is now almost universal. Fear drives men to religion and every Wednesday there are fasts and prayers at every church in the kingdom. All those who have not urgent business are sent away from Court nor may any enter the Palace without

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

a ticket, signed after an examination proving that the person has not come from an infected district."[1]

On the 18th of September the Queen and her Court arrived at Winchester, and two days later they were joined there by the King. On their entry into the town they were received by the Mayor and Corporation and presented with two large silver cups. In October Arabella sent a short note to her aunt which shows how faithful in the midst of all the gaiety she was to the silent friends of her girlhood.

"Madame According to your commandment, I send your ladyship a few scribbled lines, though I be now going in great haste to give my attendance with some company that is come to fetch me. I am as diligently expected and as soon missed as they that perform the most acceptable service. And because I must return at an appointed time to go to my book, I must make the more haste thither. So praying for your happiness, I humbly take my leave.

"From Winchester, the 6th. of October. 1603.

"Your ladyship's niece to command

"ARBELLA STUART."[2]

But just before this Arabella had seen the prophecy she wrote to "incredulous you" come true. Some time in September the old Lord Admiral announced his marriage to the King's and Arabella's cousin, Lady Margaret Stewart. She was young enough to be his granddaughter, and the match caused great amusement at Court. "And now my good Lord you shall not think but we have gallants of seventy years that in one night could dance himself into a fair lady's favour," wrote the Earl of Worcester at the time of the marriage.[3]

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

[2] Add. MSS., 4164, fol. 179.

[3] Nichol.

Naturally, very shortly after the Court's arrival, the plague appeared at Winchester. As early as October 13th the Secretary mentions that the Court may have to move on to Salisbury on that account. But for a time, at least, the disease did not seem to gain much ground, possibly owing to the precautions taken by the town, to ensure extra cleanliness of the streets, and as far as possible isolation. During the plague time a wise regulation was acted upon by the city authorities.

"It is ordered that Mr. White shall extract the names of a sufficient number of persons in the city who may by order be appointed to watch and ward both the infected houses and the gates of the city, and that the wardens of the infected houses shall have two Messengers, to attend them to go up and down for the necessaries of the infected persons."[1]

Arabella studied to such purpose at Winchester, that in one of her letters to her uncle she excuses herself from further writing on the score of "bad eyes."

"I humbly thank your lordship for the (as to me it seemed I assure you) short letter of two sheets of paper which I received from you by this bearer Mrs. Nelson. The letters to my Lord Cecil and Sir Thomas Edmonds were delivered, though not so soon as I wished, they being both absent from hence, so that Sir Thomas's was delivered to the doorkeeper of the Council Chamber, and Sir Thomas not coming hither so soon as was expected, Mr. Hercy thought good to fetch it from him (the doorkeeper); and how he hath since disposed of it, I know not, nor doubt not but he hath done with it as you would have him, for he seems to me very well instructed in your mind. My Lord Cecil had his as soon as he came.

[1] *Archives of Winchester.* C. Bailey.

"My bad eyes crave truce till they may without their manifest damage write a letter of a larger volume. And so praying for your lordship's honour and happiness in the highest degree that ever subject possessed, I humbly take my leave.

"From Fulston, the 27th of October. 1603.

"Your lordship's niece

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

In spite of the plague, the Court continued at, or very near to, Winchester, for November was drawing near, and in November there was to be a great trial. It had shadowed Arabella all the summer, not that she exactly feared, but she knew that her name would be dragged into it, and from that she shrank.

About this time, and speaking of this plot, the Secretary wrote: "Lady Arabella too, though innocent and highly honoured by the Queen, is in great perturbation." It was unfortunate that shortly after the discovery of the treason some talk arose of marrying Arabella to the Duke of Savoy.

Now James, though he testified great fondness for his cousin and desire for her happiness, had about as much intention as had the late Queen of seeing her married. Therefore "all this disturbs the King who cannot make up his mind whether he should lean to the side of rigour or of clemency."

We have seen how frequent during Elizabeth's lifetime were the nefarious schemes revolving round her possible girl-successor. But James had after all ascended the throne quietly and easily, and it might have been expected that he would be allowed to occupy it in peace for some time. Yet in this very summer of 1603, very shortly after the King's arrival, England was convulsed by the discovery of a plot—or rather

[1] Cooper.

two—which threatened his safety, and which was to assure the downfall of one of the most brilliant and romantic figures of the dazzling crowd that had surrounded Elizabeth of England with such glory—Sir Walter Raleigh.

Lord Henry Howard, in the correspondence he had carried on with James before his accession to the English throne, had never lost an opportunity of vilifying Raleigh, whom he hated. Neither were Raleigh's friends spared; especially were the characters of Northumberland and Cobham injured. "Hell cannot afford such a like Triplicity, that denies the Trinity," Howard wrote to James, speaking of Raleigh, Cobham, and Northumberland.[1] Cecil also was insanely jealous of Raleigh,[2] and from the very commencement of his correspondence with James sought to lay the foundation of Sir Walter and his friends' ruin. Consequently, long before he arrived in England, the King's mind had been poisoned, and he was well prepared to find Raleigh a traitor. During his absence in Jersey, of which island he was Governor, every effort was made by his enemies, and made successfully, to turn the dying Queen against her favourite. Thus a cloud of disgrace had already enwrapped Raleigh before James' accession. Major Hume[3] says:—

"It is difficult for Englishmen in these times to conceive the distrust and dislike then entertained for Scotsmen. They were of course foreigners and had for centuries been more or less closely allied to France, the secular enemy of England; their country was poor, and a large part of it in semi-savagery; and it was an article of faith with the most patriotic Englishmen

[1] Costello. [2] *Comprehensive History.* [3] *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh.*

that the Scot must never be allowed to dominate this country. But the fates had fought in favour of James. . . . There was time for the Catholic and anti-Scots English party to choose Arabella Stuart as their candidate, but not time for the proposed Spanish support to aid her. There was practically therefore no other candidate than James ready at the time of the Queen's death, and the best that the patriotic party could do was to limit to some extent the anticipated ravages of the Scottish locusts upon the fat pastures of the South. At the meeting at Whitehall, Raleigh's is said to be the voice that gave utterance to this feeling. He expressed an opinion that some limit ought to be placed on the power of the new King to appoint Scotsmen to English offices. Doubtless many thought so as well, but each man was eagerly looking out for his own future, and dared not anger the coming King . . . and Raleigh's voice, if it gave forth such utterances as those mentioned, found no echo outside."

Nor were they likely to raise Raleigh in the good opinion of James. Various accounts exist of their first meeting, but all that can be safely assumed from them is that the King accorded Raleigh no warm reception. Worse was to follow shortly; he was deprived of his post of Captain of the Guard, in favour of Sir Thomas Erskine,[1] and two months later the government of Jersey was taken from him. James by his act, popular with the people, of calling in the monopolies, considerably lessened Raleigh's income,[2] and finally Durham Place, a house belonging to the Crown, and the ancient palace of the See of Durham, which had been granted by Elizabeth to Raleigh, was demanded from him. In vain Raleigh endeavoured to propitiate the King; a patriotism that led to war was dear to Raleigh's

[1] A relative of the Earl of Mar.

[2] He held a patent for licensing taverns.

heart, but was the most unlikely virtue in the world to please King James, and unfortunately it was by preaching that, that the great adventurer sought to re-establish himself in favour. Cecil had no intention of sharing the King with a rival favourite, and gave Raleigh little time in which to win the royal regard, before he supplied the King with fresh proofs of Raleigh's "villainy." An absurd conspiracy among certain Catholics gave Cecil his opportunity.

"The Jesuits, with Parsons in Rome or in Spain, were bound heart and soul to the Spanish interest. . . . The secular priests, on the contrary, had, as time went on, resented the unquiet and unpatriotic action of the Jesuits, and had assumed the moderate attitude advocated by the French party and, generally speaking, by the Vatican. They resented the idea of having a king imposed upon England by Spanish pikes. If they could not have a Catholic sovereign they would put up with a Protestant, if only he would refrain from persecuting them. Two of the leaders of this party of priests—Watson and Clarke—disappointed that James had not consented to grant toleration, formed a plan in imitation of several that had been resorted to during James' youth in Scotland, of seizing him and extorting from him a decree of full religious toleration. Their confederates were few and unimportant, two or three Catholic gentlemen, Anthony Copley, Sir Griffin Markham, Lord Cobham's brother George Brooke, and at first Lord Grey de Wilton, who wanted toleration for the Puritans, but who was deceived with regard to the real object of the plot. Anything which would have the effect of bringing about religious concord in England was naturally opposed to the objects of the Jesuit party, which aimed, at least, at Catholic supremacy; and some of the Jesuit fathers who had heard of the plot communicated it to Cecil. This foolish and

ill-considered conspiracy was called the 'Bye' or 'Priests' Treason,' and there is no proof of any sort that Raleigh was connected with it; although Cobham must have at least been cognisant of it."[1]

Copley was arrested on the 6th of July; George Brooke on the 14th; the rest of the conspirators a little later.

On the 13th or 14th of July Raleigh was at Windsor waiting for the King, in whose train he was going hunting. Cecil told him that the Council wished to ask him some questions, whereupon Raleigh immediately attended it.[2] He was questioned as to his knowledge of the "Bye" plot, and could truthfully assert his innocence. The Council then passed on to the main plot, and questioned him as to his knowledge of the scheme in favour of Arabella, and the communications between Cobham and Aremberg.[3] Raleigh, of course, professed entire ignorance of the whole matter, and was then allowed to retire. Mr. Hume says that "George Brooke, while under examination about the 'Bye' conspiracy, had opened up a wider vista than that of the 'Priests' Treason,' by confessing knowledge of a more important plot being hatched between his brother Cobham and Count Aremberg; and on the 19th of July Cobham himself was interrogated by the Council, and denied all knowledge of the plot attributed to him by his brother."

There is no doubt, however, that certainly Cecil and probably the King knew of this plot before Brooke's confession, as Cecil in a letter says: "She (Arabella) received a letter from my Lord Cobham to prepare her, which she laughed at and immediately sent it to the

[1] Hume, *Life of Raleigh.* [2] *Comprehensive History.*
[3] Count Aremberg was the Flemish Ambassador.

King."[1] However much she laughed at first, she speedily grew more dismayed as the months drew towards November, when the trial was to take place. She cannot have feared for her safety, as the King repeatedly assured her of his affection and protection, but she probably disliked the thought of her name being connected again with any treachery, and dreaded the comments likely to be made. In the meantime Raleigh, after protesting his innocence of all knowledge of either plot, took the extraordinary step of writing to Cecil and avowing his belief that intelligence passed between Cobham and Aremberg, and to advise Cecil to arrest Rensy, a servant of Aremberg, who he believed would know something of the business. That letter was fatal to Raleigh. Cobham was his great friend and political associate, and few among his enemies would be likely to believe that Raleigh "suspected" only, and had not some surer knowledge. Cecil warily showed Raleigh's letter to Cobham, who immediately lost his temper and denounced Raleigh.[2] No sooner done, however, than he retracted it, and on the 29th of July he completely cleared Raleigh of any complicity, taking the entire blame himself. That, however, was little to the purpose; Raleigh was by then safely lodged in the Tower, and a better opportunity for ruining him was unlikely to present itself. If no evidence existed, it must be manufactured. George Brooke was perfectly willing to accuse either his brother or Raleigh of anything the Council might desire—probably in hope of reward. With such a witness against him, "one who had never loved him," it was no wonder Raleigh despaired. He felt sure that his condemnation was intended long before his trial took

[1] Lodge. [2] *Comprehensive History.*

place; but that did not prevent his making a gallant fight in the face of his enemies on the bench, the virulent abuse of the Attorney-General, and the complete defiance of all rules of justice.

The trial took place at Winchester in the Bishop's Palace on the 17th of November, and the prisoners were removed thence from the Tower. They made the journey in coaches, attended by an escort of light horse. Multitudes of people crowded to see Raleigh pass to his trial, and so bitter were their exclamations and unruly their attitude that fears for his life were entertained by his gaolers. At the trial, too, were throngs of courtiers and their ladies—friends and enemies alike; and up in a gallery, shrinking from the curious spectators, was the Lady Arabella, attended by the Lord Admiral. He it was who, during the progress of the trial, stood up and declared: "The lady doth here protest upon her salvation that she never dealt in any of these things, and so she willed me to tell the Court."[1]

Indeed, no one seems to have looked upon Arabella as anything but innocent. Cecil, speaking of her at the time, said: "Here hath been a touch of the Lady Arabella Stuart, the King's kinswoman. Let us not scandal the innocent by any confusion of speech; she is as innocent of all these things as I, or any man here."[1] Indeed, Arabella throughout the trial was very little mentioned. Only in the indictment came the phrase, "and then and there had conference with him how to advance Arabella Steward to the crown and royal throne of this kingdom";[2] and once again

[1] Lodge.

[2] Arraignment of Sir Walter Raleigh copied by Sir Thomas Overbury; printed 1648. *Somers' Tracts.*

when the Attorney-General shouted "Your intent was to set up the Lady Arabella as a titular Queen and to depose our present rightful King."[1] Dudley Carleton, writing to his great friend John Chamberlain, relates a curious sentence of Raleigh's in connection with Arabella. It occurs in the following letter,[2] which also gives many interesting details of the trial:—

"I was not present at the first or second arraignment, wherein Brooke, Markham, Brookesby, Copley and the two priests were condemned for practising the surprise of the King's person, the taking of the Tower, the deposing of the Councillors, proclaiming liberty of religion. They were all condemned under their own confessions, which were set down under their own hands, as declarations, and compiled with such labour and care, to make the matter they undertook very feasible, as if they had feared they should not say enough to hang themselves. Parham was acquitted being only drawn in by the priests as an assistant, without knowing the purpose, yet had he gone the same way as the rest (as it is thought), save for a word the Lord Cecil cast in the way, as his cause was in handling, that the King's cause consisted as much in freeing the innocent as condemning the guilty. The commissioners for the trial were, the Lord Chamberlain, Lord of Devon, Lord Henry Howard, Lord Cecil, Lord Wotton, the Vice-Chamberlain, the two Chief Justices, Justices Gawdy and Warburton. Of the King's Council, none were employed in that, or the arraignment but the Attorney (Coke) Heale and Phillips; and in effect none but the Attorney.

"Sir Walter Raleigh served for a whole act, and played all the parts himself. His cause was disjoined

[1] Hume.

[2] *Letters of Sir Dudley Carleton.*

from the Priests', as being a practice only between himself and the Lord Cobham, to have brought in the Spaniard, and to have raised rebellion in the realm, by fastening money upon the discontented, to have set up the Lady Arabella and to have tied her to certain conditions; as to have a perpetual peace with Spain; not to have bestowed herself in marriage, but at the discretion of the Spaniard and to have granted liberty of religion. The evidence against him was only Cobham's confession which was judged sufficient to condemn him; and a letter was produced, written by Cobham the day before by which he accused Raleigh as the first practiser of the treason between them; though he showed to countervail this, a letter written by Cobham, and delivered to him at the Tower, by which he was clearly acquitted. . . .

"It was thought that the lords would have been arraigned on Tuesday last, but they were put off till Friday and Saturday, and had their trials apart before the Lord Chancellor (Ellesmere) as Lord Steward for both those days, eleven earls, nineteen barons. The Duke,[1] the Earl of Mar, and many Scottish lords stood as spectators, and of our ladies, the greatest part, as the Lady Nottingham, the Lady of Suffolk, and the Lady Arabella, who heard herself much spoken of these days. But the arraignment before, she was more particularly remembered, as by Sir Walter Raleigh for a woman with whom he had no acquaintance, and one whom of all that he saw he never liked; and by Sergeant Hale, as one that had no more right to the Crown than himself; and for any claim that he had to it, he utterly disavowed it. Cobham led the way on Friday, and made such a fasting day's piece of work of it, that he discredited the place to which he was called; never was seen so poor and abject a spirit. He heard his indictment with much fear and trembling, and would sometimes interrupt it by forswearing what

[1] Lennox.

he thought to be wrongly inserted; so as, by his fashion, it was known, ere he spake, what he would confess or deny. In his first answer, he said he had changed his mind since he came to the bar; for whereas he came with an intention to have made his confession without denying anything, now seeing many things inserted in the indictment with which he could not be charged, being not able in one word to make distinction of many parts, he must plead to all not guilty. For anything that belonged to the Lady Arabella, he denied the whole accusation, only said she had sought his friendship and his brother Brooke had sought hers."

Yet in the indictment mention was made of three letters "that Arabella should write, one to the Archduke, another to the King of Spain and another to the Duke of Savoy promising three things. 1st, To establish firm peace between England and Spain. Secondly, To tolerate the Romish and Popish superstition. Thirdly, To be ruled by them for the contriving of the marriage."[1]

Brooke, it was also stated, was chosen to incite Arabella to write—yet, according to Cecil,[2] Cobham was the first to approach her on the subject. As Arabella listened to Raleigh's magnificent defence, to Brooke, giving treacherous evidence against his fellow-plotters, both striving to save lives they well knew were already forfeited, she must have congratulated herself upon the common sense that had prevented her falling into a dangerous trap. Had she hesitated long before sending Cobham's letter to the King, no asseverations as to her innocence, no splendid oratory

[1] *Historical Tracts.* Somers.
[2] See *ante.*

would have saved her from standing beside the other conspirators. Sentence of death was passed, and the two priests were the first to die, followed shortly by Brooke. But Grey, Cobham, Markham, and Raleigh were given their lives after many appeals to the King's mercy and sent to the Tower. Little then did Arabella think that she was fated after all to join them in their prison, to inspire a very hopeless passion in one of them.

Probably the anxiety she had experienced about the course of the trial had affected Arabella's health; at all events, two short notes written in November show that she was not at all well.

"Madame,

"Because I received a letter from you by this gentlewoman, I dare not, for incurring her opinion of my relapse into some unkindness toward you, but send you a few lines. I will keep a note of the dates of my letters. That letter of yours which I received since from Mr. Hercy I have answered by him. My eyes are extremely swollen, and yet I have not spared them when I have had occasion to employ them for your sake. Therefore now they may boldly crave cessation for this time, only performing their office whilst I subscribe myself such as I am and ever will continue that is

"Your ladyship's niece to command

"ARBELLA STUART.

"From Fulston November 4th. 1603."[1]

"I must only return your Lordship humble thanks for the letter I have received from you, and reserve the answer till I trust a few days will make me able

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, fol. 180*b*.

to write without extreme pain of my head. Mr. Cooke can tell your lordship all the news that is here.

"And so praying for your lordship's happiness I humbly take my leave.

"Your lordship's niece

"ARBELLA STUART.

"November 28th. 1603. Fulston."[1]

In only two of the letters of this time does Arabella make any allusion to the trial. The "gross and subtle lawyer" she speaks of was probably Coke—the description fits him like a glove.

"Madame,

"I humbly thank you for your . . .[2] expressed many ways and lately in the letter . . . from you by my cousin Lacy's man. How defective memory be in other ways assure yourself I even for all matters concerning that great party much less such great ones, as I thank God, I was acquainted withal.

"Therefore when any great matter comes in question rest secure, I beseech you, that I am not interested in it as an actor, howsoever the vanity of wicked men's designs have made my name pass through a gross and subtle lawyer's lips of late to the exercise and increase of my patience and not their credit. I trust I have not lost so much of your good opinion as your pleasant post script would make one that were suspicious of their assured friends (as I never was) believe. For if I should not prefer the reading of your kind and most welcome letters before all Court delights (admit I delight in them as much as others do) it were a sign of extreme folly; and liking Court sports no better than I do, I know you cannot think me so transformed as to esteem anything less than them, as your love and

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, fol. 181.

[2] Blanks occur in MSS. Brit. Museum.

judgment together makes me hope you know I can like, nor loving nothing better than the love and kindness of so honourable friends as you and my uncle. Wherefore I beseech you, let me hear often your love by the length and number of your letters. My follies and ignorances will minister you sufficient matter for as many and as long letters as you please, which I beseech you may be as many and as copious as may be without trouble.

"I have satisfied the honourable gentlewoman without raising any expectation in her to receive letters from you, which is a favour I desire only may be reserved for myself, my lord Cecil, and your best esteemed friends. I asked her advice for a New Year's gift for the Queen, both for myself who am altogether unprovided, and a great lady, a friend of mine, that is as in my case for that matter; and her answer was that the Queen regarded not the value but the device. The gentlewoman liked neither gown nor petticoat so well, as some little bunch of rubies or some such daft toy. I mean to give her Majesty two pair of silk stockings lined with plush, and two pairs of gloves lined if London afford me not some daft toy I like better whereof I cannot bethink me. If I knew the value you would bestow, I think it near no bad matter to get her or Mrs. Hartside understand the Queen's mind without knowing who asked it. The time is short therefore you had need lose none of it. I am making the King a purse and for all the world else I am unprovided. This time will manifest my poverty more than all the rest of the year.' But why should I be ashamed of it when it is others' fault and not mine? My quarter's allowance will not defray this one charge I believe. Sir William Stuart continueth his charitable desire, but he cannot persuade me to lose by my labour, how little soever he esteem his own to so good an end, which I wish but cannot think feasible at least by me.

"Thus praying for the increase of your happiness every way, I humbly take my leave.

"From Fulston the 8th. of December. 1603.

"Your ladyship's most affectionate niece to command

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

The second letter, containing an allusion to the trial, is written to her uncle. By that time Arabella had recovered her usual teasing spirit.

"That night the Queen came hither which was on Friday the 16th. of December, I received your Lordship's packet to me by one of my Lord Cecil's men. Mr. Hercy's letter I keep till I see him, which will be very shortly as he lately told me. I humbly thank you for your thanks to my Lord Cecil for me. I am a witness not only of the rare gift of speech which God hath given him, but of his excellent judgment in choosing most plausible and honourable themes, as the defending a wronged lady, the clearing of an innocent knight, etc. I humbly thank you for your letter to my Lord Bishop of Winchester, which, if it be willing (as I doubt not but it is) in that sort as may avail the recommended, is worth her favours of greater value than you had been willing to grant; but if as being written invita Minerva, they be unto him like Uriah's sealed letter. Alas! What have I done! Well, I suspect you not, therefore now you may deceive me (who am better persuaded of your judgment), if you do not perceive I cast that doubt only to make you merry with looking into the infiniteness of suspicion, if one will nourish it; not that I have the least doubt of your honourable dealing with any, and especially myself.

"The invitation is very cold if the Christmas guests you write of accept it not, for they knew their enter-

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, fol. 184. The blanks occur in the copy in the British Museum.

tainment and welcome in a worse place, and yet were so bold as to invite themselves thither. I humbly thank you that for my sake they shall be the welcomer to you, who, in regard of their nearness of blood to yourself and my aunt, must needs be so very welcome that, (if you had not written it) I should not have thought they could have been more welcome to you in any respect than that.

"Your venison shall be welcome to Hampton Court and merrily eaten.

"I dare not write unto you how I do, for if I should say well, I were greatly to blame; if ill, I trust you would not believe me I am so merry. It is enough to change Heraclitus into Democritus to live in this most ridiculous world, and enough to change Democritus into Heraclitus to live in this most wicked world. If you will not allow reading of riddles for a Christmas sport, I know not whether you will take this philosophical folly of mine in good part this good time.

"I write to your Lordship by a messenger of Mr. Hercy, an answer to my cousin Lacy's man, of such news as there were news, as I think in the North, and now have I none to send but that the King will be here to-morrow. The Polonian Ambassador shall have audience on Thursday next. The Queen intendeth to make a masque this Christmas to which end my Lady of Suffolk and my Lady Nottingham have warrants to take of the late Queen's best apparel out of the Tower at their discretion. Certain noblemen (whom I may not name to you because some of them have made me of their council) intend another; certain gentlemen of good sort another. It is said there shall be thirty plays. The King will feast all the Ambassadors this Christmas. Sir John Hollis yesterday convoyed some new come Ambassador to Richmond, and it was said (but uncertainly) to be a muscovian. I have reserved the best news for the last, and that is the King's pardon of life to the not

executed traitors. I dare not begin to tell you of the royal and wise manner of the King's proceeding therein, lest I should find no end of extolling him for it, till I had written out a pair of bad eyes, and therefore praying for your Lordship's happiness I humbly and abruptly take my leave.

"From Hampton Court. the 18th. of December. 1603.

"Your Lordship's niece

"ARBELLA STUART."

CHAPTER VII

FOR Anne of Denmark, strong, pleasure-loving, extravagant, the life she led in England was ideal. Her position was not a responsible one; her husband himself had no wish to rule, he was fully content that his ministers should do so in his name, and those ministers so trusted by the King were not minded to receive either aid or interference from the Queen Consort.

Anne possessed good abilities and a firm will, but lest she should chafe against her powerless position it was necessary for both to lie dormant. She saw where her comfort lay—and therein she may have been sensible—and contented herself with those good things her position gave her, pleasures which she could enjoy without risking the displeasure of her husband and his ministers, by what would be probably unavailing interference. Yet her contentment belittled her character and developed the folly in her, till she stepped beyond the pleasures of a woman, and found her daily happiness in the little joys that satisfy a child.

More than once in her letters Arabella speaks slightingly of the Court's enjoyments, of her aloofness from them, yet vaguely in general terms. But once, just before the Christmas of 1603, she gives a vivid description of those amusements in which she could not share with any delight.

"It may please your lordship to pardon me if writing

now in haste, with a mind distracted with the several cares of a householder, and those that this remove[1] and New Year's tide add thereto, I omit that sometimes which were perchance more material to write than that I write, and forget many things which according to the manner of us that have only afterwits, come not to mind till your letters be gone, and then are too ancient news to be sent by the next.

"I received your lordship's letter safe by Mrs. Nelson, and that 'your' in my aunt's letter was plural, so that I meant I had received your lordships and hers how illsoever I expressed it. I will amend my obscurity God willing. Your Lordship taxeth my obscurity in the comment upon some part of a letter of mine you desire to have explained. But, whatsoever you took for the explanation of it I am sure I sent you none for I knew not what it was you desired to have expounded.

"I pray you take not that 'pro concesso' in general which is only proper to some monsters of our sex, because I daily see some even of the fairest amongst us, misled, and willingly and wittingly ensnared, by the prince of darkness. But yet ours[2] shall still be the purer and more innocent kind. There went ten thousand virgins to heaven in one day. Look but in the almanac and you shall find that glorious day. And if you think there are some, but not many of us that may prove Saints, I hope you are deceived. *But not many rich, not many noble, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* So that riches and nobility are hindrances from heaven as well as our nature's infirmity. You would think me very full of divinity and desirous to show that little I have, in both which you should do me wrong, if you knew what business I have at Court and yet preach to you. Pardon me, it is not my function. Now a little more to the purpose I have delivered your

[1] The Court was going to Whitehall.

[2] Arabella means her own sex.

two patents signed and sealed to Mr. Hercy. If it be not an inexcusable presumption in me to tell you my mind unasked, as if I would advise you what to do, pardon me if I tell you I think your thanks will come very unseasonably so near New Year's tide, especially those with which you send any gratuity. Therefore consider if it were not better to give your New Year's gift first to the Queen, and your thanks after, and keep Mr. Fowler's till after that good time. New Year's tide will come every year and be a yearly tribute to them you begin with.

"You may impute the slowness of your thankfulness to Mr. Hercy or me that acquainted you no sooner with your own matter.

"The Spanish Ambassador invited Madame Beaumont (the French Ambassador's Lady) to dinner, requesting her to bring some English ladies with her. She brought my Lady Bedford, Lady Rich, Lady Susan (Vere), Lady Dorothy with her and great cheer they had. A fortnight after he invited the Duke (of Lennox) the Earl of Mar, and divers of that nation, requesting them to bring the Scottish for he was desirous to see some natural beauties. My lady Anne Hay and my cousin Drummond went, and, after the sumptuous dinner were presented first with two pairs of Spanish gloves a-piece, and my Lady Anne a gold chain of little links, twice about her neck sent her. Yesterday the Spanish Ambassador, the Florentine and Madame de Beaumont took their leave of the Queen till she comes to Hampton Court.

"There is an Ambassador come from Polonia and fain he would be gone again because of the freezing of their seas, but he hath not yet had an audience. The Venetians lately sent two Ambassadors with letters both to the King and Queen. One of them is returned with a very honourable despatch; but he staying but a few days, and the Queen not being well he saw her not. The other stays here still. It is said that the

Turk hath sent a 'Chau' to the King. It is said the Pope will send a knight to the King on embassy. The Duke of Savoy's embassy is daily expected. But out of this confusion of embassies will you know how we spend our time on the Queen's side. Whilst I was at Winchester there were certain child-plays remembered by the 'fair' Ladies viz: 'I pray my Lord give me a course in your Park;' 'Rise pig and go;' 'One penny follow me;' etc. And when I came to Court they were as highly in request as ever cracking of nuts was. So I was by the Mistress of the Revels not only compelled to play at I know not what (for till that day I never heard of a play called 'Fire),' but even persuaded by princely example to play the child again. This exercise is mostly used from ten of the clock at night to two or three in the morning; but that day I made one it began at twilight and ended at supper time. There was an interlude; but none so ridiculous (ridiculous it was) as my letter, which I here conclude, with many prayers to the Almighty for your happiness and so humbly take my leave.

"Your honoured niece

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

It is a harmless but not a very dignified picture, and it holds no suitable background for Arabella with her learning, her love of books, her quick sense of the ridiculous.

In a year or two she began to take a less prominent part in Court gaieties, her name is less often mentioned, but in 1603 she was making every effort to secure the royal favour, to become independent of her relatives, even to be able to requite their past kindness. So she played "Rise pig and go" with what grace she could, and received her reward in the extension of the Queen's favour.

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, ff. 181*b*, 182, 182*b*, 183.

Meanwhile the Court still moved from place to place, and by the 1st of December had reached Salisbury. Those who wished to see the King, ministers anxious to transact some necessary business, foreign representatives each urgently seeking to prejudice James in a particular country's favour, had to chase the King across half the kingdom.

And travelling in that first year of the King's accession was unusually difficult and tiresome. In addition to all the ordinary perplexities and anxieties of the traveller, long detours had now to be made to avoid plague-stricken areas; food for man and beast was more than unusually scarce, and consequently stages were longer and more comfortless. Piero Duodo and Nicolo Molin had just such a journey, and at the end of it small comfort. Though they were to be the guests of the Royal Family, the lodgings provided for them were so mean and wretched that the Venetians were dismayed and refused to enter them. But, to their astonishment, better could not be procured, the citizens of Salisbury in several cases refusing to lodge them in their houses. This may have been due to the fear of contagion or to the very crowded state of the town, the majority of the courtiers—and they were nearly twice as many as usually followed the King—being then in Salisbury. The King and Queen with their immediate attendants were at Wilton, the guests of the Earl of Pembroke. However, the Ambassadors were amply revenged for the discomfort of their first night's lodging.

"The King learning we were uncomfortably lodged, gave orders that some of his officers were to be imprisoned, also twenty citizens of Salisbury who had denied us lodging in their houses; he gave Sir Lewis

Tewknor full leave to take any steps against anyone soever, in order to secure for us the best accommodation the city afford. . . . We have at last found beds and lodging, but scattered about in different houses which is most inconvenient."[1]

Imprisonment was surely a rather severe stimulus to courtesy, but the King was not satisfied, he made a yet finer *amende*, and it was fortunate for the citizens of Salisbury that the Venetians were the reverse of revengeful.

"We were conveyed from Salisbury to Wilton, a village two miles out of Salisbury where the King is lying. . . . We reached Wilton at three in the afternoon and after resting a little in a chamber which had been prepared for us we went to meet his Majesty. The King, Queen and Prince stood at a window to see us cross the courtyard to his apartments, all the other windows were full of ladies and gentlemen; we believe that our suites must have made a fine show, both for numbers, for variety of livery, for the robes of silk and gold, the crowd of gentlemen—not merely from Venice, but from other cities, all sumptuously dressed. The King was dressed in a cloak lined with zibelline and for the rest was habited as in the picture your serenity has of him. . . . He placed the citizens of Salisbury who had been arrested at our mercy, we begged him to set them at liberty, as we had no desire that our coming should be a burden to any."

A few days later the two Ambassadors visited the Queen, who received them decorated with gorgeous jewels and strings of pearls. "Our remarks were purely complimentary, and after that we asked leave to salute the ladies of the Court."

On the following days the Ambassadors were thrown

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

into a great state of excitement by the coming of an unexpected guest. If the Salisbury citizens had been discourteous, James may be said to have gone out of his way to make up for their misdemeanours.

"We must report a singular honour which the Prince of Wales has done us, to the great surprise of all the Court. We invited some gentlemen to dine. . . . In the morning I was informed that the Prince of Wales wished to join the party. . . . I immediately gave orders for increasing the banquet. . . . He arrived with his suite and attended by the Lord Admiral and chief officers of State. He was received by us Ambassadors outside the door in the street and conducted upstairs. There his governor said that the King aware of the great injury done by his officers in giving us so poor a lodging had wished to make amends by sending us his son as a prisoner though he was confident that he would easily get him back again. . . . We stood for half an hour exchanging compliments and then went to table. . . . God be thanked it all passed off in perfect order."[1]

In the seventeenth century the most ordinary functions of the daily life of the Royal Family were complicated by such a mass of intricate ceremonious detail as to render them tedious and dreary. The letters of Ambassadors of all nations show the importance of the most minute point of etiquette in their eyes. It made life very complicated and very difficult, and it usually ended by the Ambassadors being at enmity one with another. Quite early in James' reign we are told that none of the envoys regarded or saluted each other; on one occasion the suites of the Spanish and French embassies came into violent collision on the

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

threshold of the King's presence chamber. Many of the State functions, many of the Court gaieties were marred by their quarrels; they were disagreeable when they were invited, yet offended when they were left out. King, Queen, and officials devised pacifications, and Arabella sometimes offered herself as hostess to the different Ambassadors, for as the King's cousin, her invitations were regarded as an honour, and if they were accepted James was freed from all responsibilities regarding precedence. But if ceremony gloomed over private life, over unofficial merry-makings it increased in enormity as the occasion increased in gravity. Here is an excellent description of the ceremonial attendant on dining with the King.

"The Lord Chamberlain then announced dinner. A table about sixteen feet long had been laid across the room on a dais; it stood away from the wall sufficiently to allow a free passage to the servants all round. His Majesty's seat was on the inner side, under the canopy, about the middle of the table, no other cover was laid on this table but his Majesty's. Before sitting down, he laid aside his cloak and sword and the Lord Admiral brought him water for his hands, making three deep obeisances before approaching his Majesty; he then drew nearer, kneeled down and kissing the bowl he first tested the water and then gave it to the King; with like reverences the Duke of Lennox handed him the towel. . . . Then the King's almoner stepped forward and said grace while the King remained on foot. . . . The banquet was sumptuous and abundant in the variety and quality of the food; with such a crowd of nobles waiting on us that they could hardly do their duty."[1]

Towards the end of December the plague had almost

[1] Venetian State Papers.

entirely disappeared from London. "No one ever mentions the plague, no more than if it had never been. The city is so full of people that it is hard to believe that about 60,000 deaths have taken place."[1]

This last statement is untrue, as scarcely more than half that number of persons had died.

The Court, however, decided to keep their Christmas Festival at Hampton Court Palace.

"The English keep their Christmas according to the Old Style on the 4th. of January, a Sunday. The King gave a banquet to the Ambassadors."[2]

Poor and wealthy alike nearly ruined themselves over the festivities. Commerce for many months had been hindered, if not entirely stopped; in London and other parts of the kingdom the necessaries of life—and the luxuries—were increased in price. Arabella, as we have seen, dreaded the New Year, and must have groaned over the expenses of that and the Christmas festivals, practically continuous in those days. Elizabeth had for years received an enormous number of New Year's gifts, and in her time the custom had come to be looked on as well-nigh compulsory, and for the first few years of the new sovereign's reign the practice was continued. After a little while there certainly appears to have been a diminution in the number of gifts, those who could not afford, or did not feel inclined, freed themselves from the annual toll. But so universal had the custom become that it was difficult to know how far it should be extended, and once begun, as Arabella hints in one of her letters, it had to be continued lest a friend should be turned into an enemy.

[1] Venetian State Papers.
[2] *Ibid.*

Present-making in Arabella's day had not the pretty graceful sentiment usually associated with such an action. Then, and much later, amongst all classes a "present" might be held synonymous for a "bribe" for favours expected, or at the best a thank-offering for favours in the past. Letters and diaries are filled with anxious suggestions, as to the possible value of this person, the necessity of cultivating that one. I have given so much, have I received in return a gift of proper value? Over and over again the same inquiry is met with in letters of the past.

"But now, a purse of gold is hard to come by, even for the asking," plaintively wrote a courtier of Arabella's day at the time when the present-giving was for the moment on the wane.

Arabella in spite of her complaints managed to present her good friend Cecil with some trifle and in return:—

"My lord Cecil sent me a fair pair of bracelets this morning, in requital of a trifle I presented him at New Year's tide, which it pleased him to take as I meant it. I find him my very honourable friend both in word and deed. I pray you give him such thanks for me as he many ways deserves, and especially for this extraordinary, unexpected favour, whereby I perceive his lordship reckoneth me in the number of his friends, for whom only such great persons as he reserve such favours.

"Thus praying for your lordship's happiness I humbly take my leave.

"From Hampton Court, the 11th. of January. 1604.

"Your lordship's niece

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

[1] Cooper.

To Cecil all this feasting was a wearisome annoyance. Just before it took place he wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury:—

"Other stuff I can send you none when now we are to feast seven Ambassadors, Spain, France, Poland, Florence and Savoy besides masques and much more; during all which time I would with all my heart I were with that noble lady of yours by her turf fire."[1]

"All these last days have been devoted to fêtes, banquets, jousts as is usual in England from St. Stephen's to Twelfth Night."

James, having all his life looked upon England as a land overflowing with gold, put no check upon these costly pleasures. But as a matter of fact, very little money was in the Treasury at Elizabeth's death, "and the plague has caused the greatest difficulty in collecting taxes"; the King was very soon to find that his expenditure exceeded his resources.

The Shrewsburys, however, to Arabella's grief, elected to remain in the North for Christmas and the New Year and Arabella continued perforce to hint and coax for their speedy return.

"This bearer having for a short time to visit the North, and not giving me time sufficient to write the description of three masques, besides two plays played before the Prince, since my last advertisement of these serious affairs.

"I must beseech your lordship to pardon the shortness of my letter, proceeding, partly of the short warning I had of his going down, partly of the shortness of my wit, who at this instant remember no news but either too great to be contained in my weak paper, or vulgar, or such as without detriment but of your lordship's expectation may tarry the next messenger.

[1] Lodge.

I have here enclosed the Bishop of Winchester's letter in answer of yours. I beseech you let me know what you writ, and what he answers concerning the party in whose favour I craved your letter, that I may let the good warden know as soon as may be.

"My Lady of Worcester commendeth her as kindly to your lordship and not to my aunt, as you did yourself to her in her ladyship's letter, and is as desirous to raise jealousy betwixt you two as you are like to do betwixt them.

"Thus praying to the Almighty etc.

"From Hampton Court the 10th. of January 1604.

"Your Lordship's niece

"ARBELLA STUART.[1]

"I had almost tried whether your lordship would have performed a good office betwixt two friends undesired, for I had forgotten to beseech you to excuse me to my aunt for not writing to her at this time.

"I think I am asked every day of this New Year seven times a day at least, when you come up, and I have nothing to say, but 'I cannot tell,' which it is not a pleasure to believe, and therefore if you will not resolve me nor them of this truth, yet teach me what to answer them."

One of the masques mentioned by Arabella was *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*, written by Samuel Daniel and published by him in 1604, with an explanatory dedication to Lady Lucy, Countess of Bedford.

The Queen herself and eleven of her ladies took part in it. Daniel tells us that her Majesty represented Pallas. She wore a blue mantle over her dress with silver embroidery of weapons and engines of war,

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, ff. 186, 186*b*, 187.

"and a helmet-dressing" on her head, and carried a lance and target—possibly the worthy author means a shield. Either the masque was not a success, or Daniel was a man envied by many, for the author suffered considerably at the hands of critics. In his dedication he grows very warm over some of their remarks and concludes with an expression of opinion, which may come as balm to some dramatic author of the present day.[1]

"And for the captious censurers, I regard not what they can say, who commonly can do little else *but* say; and if their deep judgment can ever serve them to produce anything, they must stand on the same stage of censure with other men, and peradventure perform no such great wonders as they would have us believe; and I comfort myself in this that in Court I know not any under him who acts the greatest parts that is not obnoxious to envy and a sinister interpretation. And whosoever shines to show most wit about these puntilios of dreams and shows, are sure sick of a disease they cannot hide and would fain have the world think them very deeply learned in all mysteries whatsoever."

The writer of this pungent reply to critics had been for many years the leading Court poet under Elizabeth's rule. As a deviser of Court masques he was in the following reign superseded by Ben Jonson, who first attracted the notice of Queen Anne by a beautiful entertainment given at Althorpe where she rested on her way from Scotland, and another presented to her at Sir William Cavendish's. Daniel's masque was doubtless open to criticism, as Jonson said of him that "Samuel Daniel was a good honest man but no poet."[2]

[1] See Dedication reprinted in Nichol.

[2] See "Memoir of Jonson" in *Annotated Edition of the English Poets.* Ed. R. Bell.

[*Photo W. A. Mansell & Co.*

BEN JONSON.

(National Portrait Gallery.)

Daniel very likely was jealous of his successor, and two lines from one of Jonson's poems probably refer to this.

> "Or poet, in the Court account, than I,
> And who doth me, though I not him, envy."[1]

Jonson was quite right in saying that he knew no envy towards Daniel, who was one of the most honourable and virtuous men of his day; a fact Jonson never hesitated to admit. Arabella must have appreciated the latter's works and very probably knew the man. Two at least of his patrons were closely connected with Arabella, Esmé Stuart, Lord d'Aubigny, her cousin, and the young Earl of Pembroke, whose wife was yet another cousin. The Earl of Pembroke sent Jonson every New Year's Day twenty pounds to buy books with, and he did not confine his patronage to that poet alone. The first play exhibited in England before James the First was at Wilton, Lord Pembroke's home, and it was presented by Shakespeare's company. Jonson was responsible for most of the masques given in the following year by Queen Anne: *The Queen's Masque*, *The Masque of Beauty*, *The Barriers*, etc. A comedy produced somewhere about 1604–5, and written jointly by Jonson, Marston, and Chapman, contained an offensive reflection on the Scotch nation, which gained for two, at least, of the authors imprisonment. This was all the more curious as Jonson himself was of Scottish origin. The prisoners soon obtained their liberty and Jonson easily won again the royal favour. It was a notable era just then for the playwright.

Queen Elizabeth had been fond of dramatic spectacles, and the drama had flourished exceedingly

[1] "The Forest."

during her reign. With James upon the throne its prosperity increased, as both the monarch and his wife were devoted to that form of amusement. The plays performed before the royal pair in a single year were no less than five times as numerous as during the late Queen's reign.[1] Representations were given by various companies, notably those known as the "King's," "Queen's," "Prince's," and "Lady Elizabeth's" players, besides the many enormous spectacles, the masques which were in part at least performed by amateurs. The expenses attendant on the professional performances were no inconsiderable item in the royal accounts. For a considerable period before James' accession there had been an office with its Master and duly salaried officials, attached to the royal household for the purpose of arranging and aiding theatrical displays. This was known as the Office of the Revels; the first Master of the Revels was appointed in 1546.

The actual office consisted of a wardrobe-room and work-room, together with a large room in which to hold rehearsals. From this office emanated everything connected with stage-craft, and it kept employed a large number of tailors, carpenters, painters, embroiderers, and property makers.

Certain of the old accounts of the "Revel Office" have been preserved, and curious reading they make in these days.

The following are some of the items taken at random, and give an excellent idea of the "dress properties" in use on the seventeenth-century stage :—

"Wooden Candlesticks for the Ladies' Masque."

"Silver Paper for the Maskers' sleeves."

[1] I am indebted for this and the following information regarding the Revels to extracts from the accounts of the Revels by Mr. Cunningham.

"Buttons and flowers for the Maskers' heads."
"Pendents of burnished gold silk for tassels."
"Shells of gold and silver."
"Pearls set on silver bone lace."
"Great roses and spangles for the Ladies' Masque."
"Six large kirtles of green satin with gold sarcenet all over wrought."
"Six pairs of gloves washed for the Maskers."
"Eight spangled bands and ruffs for children."
"Plates for the branches that bare the light in the hall at Hampton Court."
"Candlesticks of double plate."
"Wire to strain across the hall to hang the branches with the light."

Apparently Shakespeare's plays were highly favoured at the Court. For instance, there is an entry that *Henry the Fifth* was presented before the King on January 7th, and shortly afterwards "A play of the Marchant of Venis by Shaxberd," which was repeated on the following Shrove Tuesday by the King's command. Again, in 1612, performances of *The Tempest* and *Winter's Night's Tale* occurred within five days of each other. These plays were not, however, in every case presented by Shakespeare's company, his Majesty's players performing *The Merry Wives of Windsor* on a November Sunday in 1605.

Sundays and Holy Days were considered the most suitable days to present plays, *Measure for Measure* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* being given on St. John's and St. Stephen's Days respectively in 1605. While in 1608 during Christmas-tide the Court indulged

in a veritable orgy of theatricals, no less than twelve plays being performed before the King at that time.

No royal personage, however, ever attended a "first night" in the seventeenth century—if one excepts the masques which fall rather under the head of amateur than professional performances—as the curious custom prevailed of always obtaining the seal of public approval *first* before the play was presented to the King.

The amount given on one occasion to recompense the players for twelve performances was £130 of the money of James' day, equivalent to nearly five times that amount now. They also received from time to time other rewards. One curious entry extracted from the Revel Office accounts runs as follows:—

"To John Hemynges, one of his Majesty's players upon the Council warrant dated 21st. of April 1609, in the behalf of himself and the rest of his company, by way of his Majesty's reward for their private practices in the time of the infection that thereby they might be enabled to perform their service before his Majesty on Christmas Holy Day 1609 £40."

Daniel if he did not continue to write the Court masques for long seems for some time to have exercised the right of licensing plays.

Amongst the State papers of 1604 is a "grant to Edward Kirkham, Alexander Hawkins, Thomas Kendall and Robert Payne of licence to train up children to be called the 'Children of the Revels to the Queen,' and to exercise them in playing within the Blackfriars in London or elsewhere. All plays to be allowed by Samuel Danyell."

Arabella would at least have some enjoyment in one of the Court amusements. Jonson and Shakespeare she could appreciate to the uttermost.

But the daily pleasures of the chase found in her but a petulant follower. Most unfortunately for Arabella, Anne was nearly as fond of hunting as was James, and she frequently spent long days in the saddle attended by her maids.

Here is a glimpse of Arabella's attitude to the affair:—

"Madame,

"This everlasting hunting, the tooth ache, and the continual means to send to you by my Lord Cecil makes me only write these few lines to show I am not unmindful of your commandments, and reserve the rest I have to write, both to you and my uncle some few hours longer, till my pain assuage, and I have given my never-intermitted attendance on the Queen, who daily extendeth her favours more and more towards me. The Almighty send you and my uncle all prosperity, and keep me still I beseech you in your good opinion who will ever remain

"Your ladyship's niece to command

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

Nor was Arabella the only complainant. Either from dislike to the continual neglect of State affairs or from personal inconvenience many are the grumbling comments sent to friends from Court.

"Now where your lordship thinketh that stag- and buck-hunting being out we shall ply matters of State, know, my good lord, that we are, and like to be, more violent for the hare than ever we were for the buck or stag; and we will chase royally, if all go not as we wish,"[2] wrote the Earl of Worcester to Gilbert Shrewsbury.

A little later in the year he writes:—

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, 195. [2] Lodge.

"Had not this journey to Huntingdon drawn me from the place of all advertisements, you should have heard from me before this, and since my departure from London I think I have not had two hours of twenty-four of rest but Sundays, for in the morning we are on horse-back by eight, and so continue in full career from the death of one hare to another, until four at night; then for the most part we are five miles from home." [1]

No wonder that Arabella complained of the "everlasting hunting."

The astute King of France determined to make use of the new King's love of the chase and to obtain thereby an advantage over other sovereigns. Since James could not be got to stay at home and attend to State affairs even by the wily de Rosny, Henry the Fourth sent over one "Monsieur de Vitry, Captain of the French Royal Guard, with perhaps thirty hounds, as Master of the Chase to amuse the King and is in the highest favour." When alone with the King at the hunt de Vitry lost no opportunity of urging upon him the conclusion of the defensive alliance promised to Monsieur de Rosny.

The Venetian says of him that he "inspires Spanish, Flemish, and English with suspicion, they are jealous that he has suggested to the King that he should conduct his hunts all night, for in the present juncture, when the plots against his life are in the air, this proposal may cover grave consequences." [2]

But hunting was not the only amusement in which James indulged. He was almost equally fond of hawking and cock-fighting, and of watching the baiting of various wild animals.

Queen Anne, fond as she was of sport, does not

[1] Lodge. [2] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

always seem to have been a successful Diana. On one occasion, in attempting to kill a stag, she hit instead the King's favourite hound. James took the accident very good-naturedly, shortly afterwards sending his wife a splendid present, as a legacy from the dead dog.

But many other women of the seventeenth century excelled in stag-hunting. "Your lordship hath sent me a very great and fat stag, the welcomer being stricken by your right honourable lady's hand; . . . I am afraid that my Lady Alethea[1] and my Lady Cavendish will command their arrow heads to be very sharp; yet I charitably trust such good ladies will be pitiful," wrote Sir Francis Leake to Gilbert Shrewsbury.[2]

Arabella frequently speaks slightingly of the ladies about the Court, but Lord Worcester, writing to Gilbert Shrewsbury on February 2nd, 1604, gives a fuller picture of them.

"Now having done with matters of State, I must a little touch the feminine commonwealth, that against your coming you be not altogether like an ignorant country-fellow. First you must know we have ladies of divers degrees of favour, some for the private chamber, some for the bed-chamber, and some for neither certain; and of this number are only my Lady Arabella and my wife. My Lady Bedford holdeth fast to the bed-chamber; my Lady Harford would fain, but her husband hath called her home. My Lady Derby the younger, the Lady Suffolk, Ritche, Nottingham, Susan[3] Walsingham, and of late the Lady Sothwell, for the drawing-chamber, when they are not shut out, for many times the doors are locked; but the plotting and malice among them is such, that I think envy hath

[1] Lord Shrewsbury's daughter.
[2] Lodge.
[3] Probably Lady Susan Vere.

tied an invisible snake about most of their necks to sting one another to death. For the present there are now five maids, Casey, Myddelmore, Woodhouse, Gargrave, Roper, the sixth is determined but not come; God send them good fortune, for as yet they have no Mother."[1]

The long-established office of the Mother of the Maids of Honour existed in the Queen's household until the end of the seventeenth century. Early in 1604 Arabella received some news from her grandmother at Hardwick. There had been a long-standing feud between the Earl and his stepmother, and Arabella learning that the old lady was in a more placable frame of mind sought to mediate between them. She had probably considerable success, now or a little later, as many mentions occur which show them to have been on a better footing.

[2]"Having sent away this bearer with a letter to my aunt, and not your lordship, with an intention to write to you at length by Mr. Cooke, I found so good hope of my grandmother's inclination to a good and reasonable reconciliation betwixt herself and her divided family, that I could not forbear to impart to your lordship with all speed. Therefore I beseech you put on such a Christian and honourable mind as best becometh you to bear to a lady so weak to you and yours as my grandmother is. And think you cannot devise to me a greater honour and contentment than to let me be the only mediator, moderator, and peacemaker betwixt you and her. You know I have cause only to be partial on your side, so many unkindnesses and disgraces have I received from the other party. Yet will I not be restrained from chiding you (as great a lord as you are) if I find you either not willing to hearken to this good motion, or to proceed in it as

[1] Lodge. [2] Cooper.

I shall think reasonable. Consider what power you will give me over you in this, and take as great over me as you give me over you in this, in all matters but one,[1] and in that your authority and persuasion shall as far exceed theirs as your kindness to me did in my trouble. If you think I have either discretion or good-nature, you may be sure you may refer much to me. If I be not sufficient for this treaty never think me such as can add strength or honour to your family. But Mr. Cooke persuades me you think otherwise than so abjectly of me. And so praying the Almighty you may (take) such a course in this and all your other honourable designs as may with your most honour and contentment, bring you to those good ends you wish, whatever they be, I humbly take my leave.

"From Hampton Court, the 2nd. of February, 1604.

(Unsigned.)

"P.S. I beseech you bring my uncle Henry and my aunt Grace up with you to London. They shall not long be troublesome to you God willing: but because I know my uncle hath some very great occasions to (be) about London for a little while, and is not well able to bear his own charges, as I would very willingly if I were able, to so good an end as I know he comes to now. And therefore I beseech you take that trouble and pains of bringing them up, and keeping them awhile with you for my sake and our families' good. I have here enclosed sent you a letter to him; if you will not, return it to me, and let him not be discomforted to see I am not able to obtain so much of you for him. In truth, I am ashamed to trouble you with so many rude and (but for my sake, as you say) unwelcome requests; but if you be weary of me, you may soon be despatched of me for ever (as I am told) in more honourable sort than you may deny this my very earnest request."

[1] This and the last sentence of the postscript seem to refer to one of the numerous schemes for her marriage.

The Dowager Lady Shrewsbury was in a very vigorous and very testy old age. She still planned improvements and superintended her household and her building schemes with the same power and firm grasp of detail that she had ever shown. She was also occupied in as many—if not more—quarrels with her family as she had ever been, and was altogether contented with life. Not very long after this effort at mediation, Sir Francis Leake chronicles: "My Lord Cavendish's lady is very sick at Oldcoats. It is said my old lady and she have had some very discontenting speeches."

The long-desired state entry to the City took place in March, 1604, and for this ceremonial Lady Shrewsbury returned to London.

"The King's first going abroad was to visit some of his houses, for naturally he did not love to be looked on; and those formalities of state, which set a lustre upon Princes in the people's eyes, were but so many burdens to him; for his private recreations at home, and his hunting exercises abroad, both with the least disturbance were his delights. While he remained at the Tower, he took pleasure in baiting lions; but when he came abroad he was so troubled with swarms, that he feared to be baited by the people. . . . He endured this day's brunt with patience being assured that he should never have such another and his triumphal riding to the parliament that followed. But afterwards in his public appearances (especially in his sports) the accesses of the people made him so impatient, that he often dispersed them with frowns, that we may not say with curses."[1]

Molin also speaks of the crowds that jostled the King.

[1] A. Wilson.

"The King, Queen, Prince, Council and Court left Westminster by river for the Tower. They were accompanied by a large number of boats, and on landing they could only climb the stairs with difficulty, owing to the crowd which had gathered to see their Majesties."[1]

The Tower cannot have been a very cheerful residence, so many terrible, so many pathetic memories clung to its walls.

"All the prisons in the Tower had been thrown open, and the prisoners set free, but a few days earlier the four conspirators, whose lives had been spared by the King's clemency, were moved to another prison. The same was done to Sir Anthony Standen, who had been sent to the Tower on his return from Italy."[1]

His Majesty, however, managed to amuse himself fairly well in his gloomy lodgings. "There was bull-baiting and other sports." This included the baiting of lions by three large mastiff dogs, two of which being so badly injured by the lions that they died of their wounds, but the third dog recovered. "The young Prince commanded his servant E. Alleyn to bring the dog to him at St. James', where the prince charged the said Alleyn to keep him and make much of him saying, 'he that hath fought with the king of beasts should never after fight with any inferior creature.'"[2]

The King had a large menagerie of wild beasts in the Tower, and attached to his household were such officers as the Keeper of Lions and Beasts in the Tower, Keeper of Bears, and finally the Keeper of the King's Mastiffs, the dogs frequently used in the exhibitions of baiting.

"In the Tower we learn that Wednesday also was

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers. [2] Nichol.

spent in the usual sports, but yesterday morning at eleven o'clock the King left the Tower. He was preceded by all the magistrates of the city, the Court functionaries, the Clergy, Bishops and Archbishops, Earls, Marquises, Barons and Knights, superbly apparelled and clad in silk of gold with pearl embroideries; a right royal show. The Prince was on horseback ten paces ahead of the King, who rode under a canopy borne over his head by twenty-four gentlemen, splendidly dressed, eight of whom took it turn and turn about. The Queen followed twenty paces behind; she was seated on a royal throne, drawn by two white mules; in a richly furnished carriage behind her Majesty came the Lady Arabella, with certain Maids of Honour in attendance; behind her again about seventy ladies on horseback all splendidly dressed.

"In this order the procession moved from the Tower to Westminster, a distance of about three miles through the city. There were eight triumphal arches, six raised by the citizens of London, by the Dutch and by the Italians, which certainly came first both for the excellence of the design and for the painting which adorned it."[1]

As the writer was a Venetian, his opinion was probably rather biased. He goes on to relate:—

"None of the Ambassadors were present at any of these festivities, owing to the quarrel for precedence between France and Spain. The King has declined to pronounce on the point, nor will he accept the usages of other Courts for he does not admit that they have any weight with him. He resolved to invite no one, though he gave a house apiece to France, Spain and myself, whence each of us had an excellent view of all that took place."

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

The King was lavish of honours on this occasion, and yet curiously enough he declined to satisfy the desires of the city.

"The city looked for the creation of twelve barons and one duke; the latter is exceedingly desired, for there is no English duke, though there is one Scotch, Lennox, and the English cannot bear to see the first rank held by one of that nation. The King however declined to do any more."

This Duke of Lennox was Ludovic Stuart, a son of the old Duke, who had been such a favourite with James. Apparently he and Arabella were very friendly, as in one of her letters to the Shrewsburys she speaks of herself as seeking only the advice of the Duke of Lennox, since her uncle Gilbert's departure. The friends of whom Arabella speaks most frequently, those with whom she chiefly consorted, were Lord Cecil, now Viscount Cranborne, the old Lord Admiral and his wife, the Duke of Lennox, Lady Jane Drummond, and the Earl and Countess of Worcester. Three of these were cousins, and in 1604 another cousin was to come and settle at Court. This was Mary Talbot, one of the three daughters and coheiresses of her uncle Gilbert, who married the King's favourite, the Earl of Pembroke, in spite of the rumours circulated in the following letter:—

"I thank your Lordship for sparing me never so few words in the time of your taking physic which I would not should have been more for doing you harm in holding down your head at such a time; but when you are well, I hope to receive some Hardwicke news, which, unless your lordship be a great deal briefer than that plentiful argument requireth, will cost you a long

letter. My aunt findeth fault with my brevity, as I think by your lordship's commandment for I know she in her wisdom respecteth ceremony so little that she would not care in time of her health for hearing from me every week that I am well and nothing else. And I know her likewise too wise to make the cause of her offence, suppose in policy she should think good to seem or to be—offended with me whom perchance you now think good to shake off as weary of the alliance.

"But I conclude your lordship hath a quarrel to me, and maketh my aunt take it upon her, and that is (for other can you justly have none), that you have never a letter of mine since your going down, to make you merry at your few spare hours, which, if it be so, you may command me in plain terms and deserve it by doing the like, and I shall as willingly play the fool for your recreation as ever. I assure myself, my Lord Cecil, my Lord Pembroke, your honourable new ally, and divers of your old acquaintance with your lordship; all the news of that is stirring, so that I will only impart trifles to your lordship at this time as concern myself.

"After I had once carved, the Queen never dined out of her bedchamber, nor was attended by any but her Chamberer till my Lady of Bedford's return. I doubted my unhandsome carving had been the cause thereof, but her Majesty took my endeavour in good part, and with better words than that beginning deserved put me out of that error. At length (for now I am called to the service) it fell out that the importunity of certain great ladies in that or some other suit of the like had done me this disgrace; and whom should I hear named for one but my aunt of Shrewsbury, who, they say, at the same time stood to be the Queen's cupbearer.

"If I could have been persuaded to believe, or seem to believe, that whereof I knew the contrary, I might

have been threatened down to my face that I was of her counsel therein, that I dissembled deeply with my friends when I protested the contrary; for I was heard to confer with my friends when I protested the contrary; they say, to that purpose. But these people do little know how circumspect my aunt and your Lordship are with me. I humbly thank you for the example. I hear the marriage between my Lord of Pembroke and my cousin is broken, whereat some time I laugh, otherwhiles am angry, sometimes answer soberly as though I thought it possible, according as it is spoken in simple earnest, scorn, policy, or howsoever at the least I conceive it spoken. And your lordship's secrecy is the cause of this variety, (whereby some conjecture I know something), because I have no certain directions what to say in that case. I was asked within three days whether your lordship would be here within ten days; unto which (to me) strange question I made so strange an answer as I am sure either your lordship or I are counted great dissemblers. I am none; quit yourself as you may. But I would be very glad you were here, that I need not chide you by letter, as I must needs do if I be chidden either for the shortness, rareness, or preciseness of my letters, which by your former rules I might think a fault, by your late example a wisdom. I pray you reconcile your deeds and words together, and I shall follow that course herein which your lordship best allows of. In the meantime, I have applied myself to your lordship's former liking and the plainness of my own disposition. And so praying for your lordship's health, honour, and happiness I humbly take my leave.

"From Whitehall.

"Your lordship's niece
"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

This wedding was celebrated in the autumn, and

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, ff. 190, 190*b*, 191,

many are the mentions of the bride that occur in letters of about this time.

"Lord Pembroke is well and surely is as honourable and kind husband as any in Great Britain. My lady much joys in it and gives him every day more and more cause to increase it," wrote Rowland Whyte, one of the Shrewsburys' most faithful correspondents shortly after the marriage. If my Lady Pembroke was true to the character Whyte gives her—"a better lady lives not, much beloved, much respected here"—early in her married life, she deserved continued happiness. Clarendon mentions that the marriage became finally a very unhappy one. The Shrewsburys, however, were elated with it at first, and hoped great things from the influence the Earl of Pembroke had with the King.

CHAPTER VIII

EARLY in October William Fowler wrote from Hampton Court:—

"My Lady Arabella spends her time in lecture, reading, hearing of service and preaching, and visiting all the Princesses. She will not hear of marriage. Indirectly there were speeches used in the recommendation of Count Maurice, who pretendeth to be Duke of Gueldres; I dare not attempt her. The Prince Anhalt hath written to me; and albeit he toucheth nothing in his letters that concerns her, yet she nothing liketh his letters nor his Latin. Poland will insist, for his marshal is upon his journey. God give her joy in her choice or destiny."

"She will not hear of marriage," wrote this admirer of Arabella's, yet long after her death she was to be contemptuously referred to as an "elderly love-sick" woman, who we are assured spent her days seeking to obtain a husband.

How much did Arabella know of these suitors of 1604? In this autumn the Earl of Pembroke wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury: "A great Ambassador is coming from the King of Poland whose chief errand is to demand the Lady Arabella in marriage for his Master. So may your Princess of the Blood grow a great Queen and then we shall be safe from the danger of mis-superscribing letters."[1]

[1] Nichol. D'Israeli.

What the Earl meant by the last sentence it is difficult to say. Possibly it arose from some difficulty in defining Arabella's position at Court. James frequently spoke of her as "his cousin"; yet her appointments were not those of a princess, but only those of the first lady of the Court. James probably wilfully permitted this confusion, as the equivocal position in which it placed her gave him a feeling of greater security. But with regard to the Polish marriage a certain mystery exists.

Seven years later Arabella complained of the King's neglect in never providing her with a husband, and stated that she had *never been spoken with for any.*

One is left to conclude that James refused the Ambassador's request without referring it to Arabella.

But surely this match—or any of the others—was known to many about the Court, and the knowledge must eventually have reached Arabella, even supposing that Pembroke, Shrewsbury, and Secretary Fowler never mentioned the matter to her, which is somewhat improbable.

If the King never spoke to Arabella of any suitor *by name*, she could justly say she had never been "spoken with" for any. He certainly discussed her marriage with her in vague terms, and promised to find a suitable husband, and Arabella may well have wondered what was amiss with the King of Poland, but the question cannot have perturbed her very much in view of Fowler's picture of her careless attitude.

There is no doubt that a few years later Arabella wished to acquire a better defined position, which in her day was only possible of achievement by a fitting marriage. That being so, only one explanation of her contented view of the subject in 1604 appears possible—

she had small knowledge then of the new King's character and so she relied on his word.

James frequently deceived with regard to his designs; he was always ready with a golden phrase, and it required time to discover that his estimable words cloaked an uncertain, if not an absolutely contrary, intent.

In 1603 Arabella alludes to him in a family letter as "kind and loving to all his kin," and up to a certain point it was not an inaccurate estimate. He *was* kind to his wife—some of his letters to her are charming—generous to his favourites, and an affectionate father—let me repeat, up to a certain point. His treatment of his daughter Elizabeth is a good illustration of his character. He professed great affection for her, and showed it while she was in England; he was good-natured with her, generous. Yet after her marriage, in the time of her greatest trouble, when the decision of the King of England to actively support her husband would have probably changed the course of events and secured to him his possessions, James could not, or would not, bring himself to make this decision, and preferred to see his daughter and son-in-law dethroned, exiled, poverty-stricken. That was not the action of an affectionate father or of a kind man, it was in decided contradistinction to his former professions to Elizabeth; but it was an action that was significant of James' character.

On his accession his proclamations were insistent upon his intention of redressing the wrongs of the people, and on procuring perfect justice for all his subjects.

Raleigh's trial, his years of imprisonment, his death, were these the outcome of his justice?

Nor did his refusal to personally consider the petitions of his people, his reference of them to the Council, strike his subjects as a redressive action.

"You know his protestations of extraordinary affection to me," Arabella wrote in 1603, and by the autumn of 1604 she had not realized their emptiness. In his good time, James would arrange a marriage for his cousin, more, he insisted that the husband should be of a suitable position. It was truly unfortunate that reasons of policy had prevented this or that alliance, but it would not be always so; James had the good of "our beloved cousin the Lady Arabella" at heart, and Arabella waited, satisfied.

"God give her joy in her choice or destiny"—is there not a ring of sadness, of anxiety in the words? Possibly the writer of them saw her dependence on the King's promise; possibly, knowing the King's character, he feared.

The Court was increasing in gaiety and extravagance. A passion for gambling, in which the sovereigns shared, was gaining ground. The coming and going of the envoys provided excuse for many amusements. The Venetian Ambassador mentions that never in his life had he heard of so many costly presents being given to foreign representatives as in 1604. James was as ardent as ever in the hunt, in spite of occasional accidents.

"The King left Greenwich for the chase, meaning to be at Rochester on Thursday to review the fleet. As he and the Queen were riding, the King wished to pass her Majesty, but he received a kick on the leg from her horse. They had all to go home and the King was in bed for two days."[1]

[1] Venetian State Papers.

"The King came back from the chase . . . more in compliance with the prayers of the Council than from any particular wish of his own."[1]

The summer can scarcely have passed pleasantly for any about the Court. To add to their miseries it was noted at the end of June, "the weather is bitterly cold; everyone is in furs." Apparently that was an unexpected vagary on the part of the English climate; and in the ordinances for the King's household such whims were not allowed for, as "all the ladies of the Privy Chamber especially appointed to attend the Queen's Majesty, our dear bedfellow, shall have allowance from the first of November till the last of March of four bushels of coals for every two days."

But if Arabella objected to following the hounds, she was quite pleased with the result of the Shrewsburys' prowess in the field.

"I humbly thank your lordship and my aunt for the six red deer pies I have received from your Lordship by Mr. Hercy. My aunt's thanks which I received for my plain dealing with Mr. Booth, and the few lines I received last from you and my aunt by Mr. Hercy, have relation to certain conditions and promises on your lordship's part as mine, and therefore your lordship's confidence of my conditional promise resteth not in me only. I assure myself you are so honourable, and I so dear to you, that you will respect as well what is convenient for me as what you earnestly desire especially my estate being so uncertain and subject to injury as it is.

"Your Lordship shall find me constantly persevere in a desire to do that which may be acceptable to you and my aunt, not altogether neglecting myself.

[1] Venetian State Papers.

"And so I humbly take my leave praying for your happiness.

"F. Whitehall. the 18th of October. 1604.

"Your Lordship's niece

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

All this year lawsuits had been pending for various members of the Talbot family, and Arabella had been called upon to use her influence with the King. Moreover, both Sir Charles Cavendish and Lord Shrewsbury were in debt, and Arabella was certainly not in any position to help them there. She was, again, deeply in debt herself, and obliged to seek some aid from the King. In the winter she obtained a further grant of £1000 a year, which sum was to be hers inalienably for life. So far as amusements were concerned that winter was to prove a very expensive one.

Early in December the Queen's brother, the Duke of Holstein, arrived upon a visit. Molin described him as "a young Prince of twenty-four, without much knowledge of the world, who speaks and acts with great freedom."

"The Queen's brother is come to the Court, but not very rich anyway. His company are but slender, all of his own followers. He is said to be a comely man. He lodgeth in the Court, in my Lord Treasurer's lodging, and his company in my Lord of Derby's house in Cannon Place. He hath twenty dishes of meat allowed every meal and certain of the Guard appointed to attend him therewith," wrote Lord Lumley to Lord Shrewsbury.

The Duke of Holst or Holstein was warmly received by both James and Anne, and great preparations were

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, f. 192.

commenced for the celebration of Christmas and the New Year.

"Here they are preparing to keep Christmas with great solemnity and an unwonted splendour. . . . Her Majesty is preparing a masque which will cost 25,000 crowns. When the festivities are over the Queen will return to Greenwich."[1]

This masque, which was presented at Whitehall on Twelfth Night, was the *Masque of Blackness*.

"At night we had the Queen's Masque in the banqueting-house, or rather her pageant. There was a great engine at the lower end of the room which had motion and in it were the images of sea-horses with other terrible fishes, which were ridden by Moors. The indecorum was that there was all fish and no water. At the farther end was a great shell in form of a scallop wherein were four seats, on the lowest sat the Queen. . . . Their appearance was rich but too light and courtesan-like for such great ones. Instead of vizards their faces and arms up to the elbows were painted black which was disguise sufficient, for they were hard to be known; but it became them nothing like as well as their red and white and you cannot imagine a more ugly sight than a troop of lean-cheeked Moors."

The resemblance one to another was possibly heightened by their all being dressed alike.

"The attire of the Masquers was all alike in all, without difference; the colours azure and silver, but returned on the top with a scroll and antique dressing of feathers and jewels interlaced with ropes of pearl; and for the front, ear, neck and wrists, the ornament was of the most choice orient pearl, best setting off

[1] Letter from Dudley Carleton.

from the black. For the light-bearers, sea-green, waved about the skirts with gold and silver; their hair loose and flowing, garlanded with sea grass and that stuck with branches of coral."

On St. George's Day, 1605, a Chapter of the Garter was held. The Duke of Holstein and the Earl of Northampton were invested. It was early in this year also that the King's second son, Charles, was created Duke of York. In the whirl of gaiety Arabella did not forget her charities, as the following quaint letter shows:—

"Right-honourable my very good Lady

"It may please your Grace,

"This bearer is the poor man named Richard Lassye, upon whom your Grace hath been so very long desirous to show some part of your honourable pity and charity, whom by chance this day I met in the streets and because your Grace hath divers times sent to me to enquire of him, I have taken this boldness to signify thus much to your Grace by writing. And so praying God to preserve your Grace, I humbly take my leave and ever remain

"Your Grace's most humble to command with service

"JA: HUDSON."

"London the 24th. of February 1605.

"To the right honourable and my very singular good Lady my Lady Arabella her grace. d.d. at the Court."[1]

It is wonderful that Arabella was left anything to be charitable with, as the courtiers were passing through some unpleasant experiences. Theft was common enough at any time, but was not usually carried on, or at any rate to any great extent, at Court; but 1605 was to see some decidedly bold robberies.

[1] Hunter's *Hallamshire*.

Sir Dudley Carleton relates:—

"Plain pilfering has come into fashion. Sir Henry Goodier had his Chamber broken up at Court, and £120 stolen. Sir Adolphus Cary was robbed at the last remove from Whitehall of £20, and three sets of apparel which were provided for the Spanish journey; and at the same time my Lady Dorothy Hasting, who lay in the Chamber above him, was spoiled of all that ever God sent her, save that she had on her back."

Arabella must have trembled for the safety of some of her wonderful jewels.

In April a daughter was born to the Queen at Greenwich; James was very disappointed as he had ardently desired another son. It was, of course, expected that certain honours would be given at the christening, and there was keen competition to secure them. The method of granting these was very often most curious. Those favoured by the sovereign were able to obtain a promise of the bestowal of some honour upon the person who might be termed their candidate, or a patent signed by the King was handed over, with a blank left for the name to be filled in as desired.

It was an understood thing, of course, that the candidate should—perhaps reward is the most delicate term—his patron, and consequently his chance of success largely depended upon the condition of his purse. Arabella was just then greatly in the King's favour, and he handed over to her a "patent" for creating some person unnamed a baron. Arabella's uncle Sir William Cavendish—who by the way is spoken of as Mr. Cavendish or Sir William indifferently—was desirous of the honour and so:—

"Mr. Candish is at London; comes to the Court

and waits hard on my Lady Arabella for his Barony, but I am confidently assured that he will not prevail for I understand that my Lady Arabella is nothing forward in the business although we be certainly informed that my Lady hath a promise from the King for one of her uncles to be a Baron; but it is not likely to be Mr. William, for he is very sparing in his gratuity, as I hear; would be glad it were done, but would be sorry to part with anything for the doing of it; and I think he will find in this place an equal proportion betwixt his liberality and our courtesy. His chief solicitor to my Lady Arabella is Sir William Bagot. I was with Mr. Candish at my Lady Arabella's chamber who entreated me to speak to my Lady Bedford to further him, and to solicit my Lady Arabella in his behalf, but spoke nothing of anything that might move her to spend her breath for him; so that, by the grace of God, he is likely to come good speed."[1]

Mr. Lascelles was wrong; in a few weeks "Mr. Candish" blossomed into Baron Cavendish of Hardwicke. Whether Arabella received the customary "gratuity" or whether she bestowed the patent on Sir William "for love" is not recorded.

May was fixed for the christening of the little princess, and Arabella was chosen for one of the sponsors. The occasion, of course, was celebrated with all the gorgeous ceremonial possible.

"First the three Courts at Greenwich were railed in and hung about with broadcloth where the proceedings should pass. The child was brought from the Queen's lodgings through both the great Chambers and through the presence, and down the winding stairs into the Conduit Street.

"At the foot whereof attended a canopy borne by eight barons before which went the officers of arms and

[1] Lodge.

divers bishops, barons and earls. The Earl of Northumberland bore a covered gilt basin, after followed the Countess of Worcester bearing a cushion covered with lawn, which had thereon many jewels of inestimable price. Under the canopy went the Countess of Derby bearing the child and she was supported by the Dukes of Holstein and Lenox, the train of the mantle was borne by two of the greatest Countesses, then followed the godmothers, the Lady Arabella and the Countess of Northumberland after whom followed many countesses and other great ladies.

"At the entrance to the chapel stood the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury assisted with the Deans of Canterbury and of the Chapel in rich copes, received the child and bringing the child into the Traverse the quire sung certain anthems, and the lords took one side of the stalls and the ladies another."

The font in which the child was baptized was of silver and gilt "curiously wrought with figures of beasts and serpents and other antique works."

After the baby had received the name of Mary in memory of the King's mother, the godfather and godmothers ascended to the altar and there presented their offerings.

"All being ended, the gentlemen ushers and servers brought in a voider[1] of wine and comfitures, the trumpets sounded, the whole train returned the same way and order as they came, saving that the gifts of the gossips were carried by six Earls."

The christening of little Mary served as an excuse for the elevation of Lord Cecil, who was created on that occasion Earl of Salisbury. The choice of the Duke of Holstein as one of the sponsors was a strange

[1] Tray.

one; he had decidedly outstayed his welcome, as he was plainly shown by both King and Queen.

Several rather contemptuous mentions of him occur in different letters, one from Carleton to Mr. Winwood is rather amusing.

"The tilting this year will be at this place; here is much practising, and the Duke of Holst is a learner among the rest, whose horse took it so unkindly the last day to be spur-galled on the fore-shoulder, that he laid his little burden on God's fair earth."

The "little burden's" departure was definitely fixed for June, which, if Molin's account of his visit is true, must have been a relief.

"The Duke of Holst left on Friday very unwillingly; for as I have already reported this country pleases him much. On the other hand he has disgusted everybody, and especially the Queen his sister, who for two months has refused to speak to him. The King has frequently endeavoured to induce her to see him but in vain; finally one day he took the Duke into the Queen's apartments and some words of affection were exchanged. All the same the Queen is not mollified. The cause it seems was that the Duke claimed to go into the Queen's rooms whenever he chose; she did not like this. He would not take the hint and the Queen gave orders that he was not to be admitted without being announced. . . . One day he said to his Majesty that he had attended the King all through the winter in his hunting of the hare, and proposed to attend him in his stag hunts which are beginning now and will go on till Christmas. The King remained silent and so the Duke knew that his presence was unwelcome. He has at last made up his mind to leave." [1]

Undoubtedly it was time, as his stay was said to

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

have cost the King 60,000 crowns, besides a sum of £3000 assigned to be paid him yearly. His certainly had been a profitable as well as a pleasant visit.

Edmund Lascelles kept the Earl of Shrewsbury well supplied with news and gossip. The latest nine days' wonder was that concerning a preacher named Haddock. The affair was considered so strange an enigma that the wise King's help had to be obtained before the mystery could be solved.

"I doubt not but your lordship hath heard of the man at Oxford that preacheth in his sleep; it is very true; and he maketh very excellent and learned sermons, by the report of those that have very good judgment, and when he is awake he is but a dull fellow and known to be no scholar. In those sermons that he maketh in his sleep he will speak exceeding good Hebrew and Greek, and when he is awake understandeth neither of the languages; he professes physic and his name is Haddock. All the Fellows and scholars of the College come as due to hear him preach in his sleep as they do to any other sermon; when he wakes he knows nothing what he said, but wondereth to see so many about him." [1]

The preacher played his part so cleverly and his hearers were so credulous that for a time he flourished exceedingly. But when the King summoned Haddock to his presence the man confessed his imposture and all England applauded the ability of the King who could discover the truth when matched by so clever a rogue. But his Majesty's method was exceedingly simple. On seeing Haddock, he immediately told him that "he knew all, would pardon him if he confessed, but would punish him if he denied. . . . When at Oxford he (Haddock) had read the manuscript studies of some persons, com-

[1] Lodge.

mitted them to memory, and repeated them feigning to sleep, but being really awake."

In 1605 James decided to pay the University of Oxford a State visit; accordingly he left Woodstock on the 27th of August, 1605, attended by the great officers of State and most of the principal nobility, for that town.

The King and Queen and their suites lodged at Christ Church College, but Prince Henry with a large number of young companions stayed at Magdalen College.

For almost four days Oxford entertained its royal guests, providing such a rapid succession of entertainments and disputations that the courtiers were tired out and even the learned James was satiated.

On his arrival in Oxford, Dr. John King, the Dean of Christ Church, presented him with a volume of congratulatory verses; and the evening was filled by the performance of a Latin comedy entitled *Vertumnus*, which was performed by the students of that college.

Neither trouble nor expense had been spared to procure suitable magnificence. Stages and many tiers of seats were erected in Christ Church Hall and St. Mary's Church, where the disputations were to take place.

The University, determined that all should go well, sent for and entertained during those four days the Comptroller of His Majesty's Works and two of his Majesty's carpenters; while they paid a large sum to Inigo Jones to furnish him with rare devices.

The same plan was followed with regard to the actors' costumes and the stage "furniture,"[1] which was hired for the time from London and sent back at the end of

[1] See *James I at Oxford*—ed. F. S. Boas and W. W. Greg, and published by the Malone Society—in this connection.

By permission.] [*Photo Oxford University Press.*

HENRY, PRINCE OF WALES.

(Hope Collection of Engravings.)

the visit. The bills for many of the goods supplied are in the archives of the University and make in these days very quaint reading.

False hair figures in quite unusual quantities, an inordinate number of wigs having been ordered; and one of the demands was "tuckes and tresses of hayre to hang loose of browne, black, fflexen or *any colour* for 20 nymphes." If the last part of the instructions was literally followed, the effect must have been striking.

As to the dresses used in the performance of the various plays they were all of the greatest magnificence, no makeshift tawdry stage-finery being permitted by the authorities. Here are a few of them taken at random from a long list:—

"Item: one lose gowne of sylver Tynsell printed wth flowers all over of sylke of needlework."

"Item: one loose gowne of black satin embroidered all ov^{r} wth gold and sylver lyke styps of Roses."

"Item: one dublett of white taffatye cutt all over, embroidered wth gold and sylver like roses and panses and sylver oaes."

"Item: one lose gowne of Ash colour nett-work flourished all o^{vr} with gold and sylver and some small black bugles, wth out sleeves."

At least they made a brave show, the amateurs of those days. Finally the Lord Chamberlain himself came down to superintend the arrangements. The 28th of August was spent in disputations in Divinity and Civil Law, at which the King, Prince Henry, and the French and Venetian Ambassadors attended; and at night a tragedy, *Ajax flagellefer*, was presented. The whole of the following morning was again

occupied with disputations, then the King, Queen, Ambassadors and the entire Court were entertained at dinner by the Earl of Dorset at New College, returning afterwards to St. Mary's for another disputation—this time in philosophy. "His Majesty closed this disputation as he had done all the former, with a determination of his own, and having given his thanks to the University in a speech was conducted back to Christ Church."[1] Later on the same evening the King and Prince Henry went to St. John's College, where the members represented yet another comedy, "which comedy, though it had the same title as that acted before at Christ Church, was very different in plot and execution."[1]

Prince Henry at Magdalen seems to have had no more restful time than his father and mother; for in addition to all the disputations he attended, various entertainments fell to his share alone. On the day of his arrival he was received by Dr. Brand, the President, and by the Fellows of Magdalen. By them "he was admitted a member and as such matriculated of the University, John Wilkinson B.D. their Fellow, afterwards President of the College, being appointed his tutor. The Prince being conducted to his lodgings in the President's apartments, was entertained there with disputations, in which Mr. William Seymour . . . performed the part of respondent."[1]

Of those taking part in the disputations the writer adds: "All of whom gave his highness so much satisfaction in the readiness of their wit, that, in testimony of it, he gave them his hand to kiss."

Later he joined the King and witnessed the comedy at Christ Church.

[1] Birch.

On the 29th he was invited to sup at his own college of Magdalen. Afterwards he was presented with a manuscript elegantly bound and adorned with gold and pearls, two pairs of rich gloves, and a book of verses in foreign languages beautifully written.

On the 30th of August the King visited the library founded by Sir Thomas Bodley, the Divinity Schools, and the colleges of Brasenose, All Souls, Queen's and Magdalen. In the meantime a tragi-comedy was presented to the Queen and her ladies at Christ Church. After dinner on that day the splendid Court rode slowly away from Oxford.

It is hardly to be wondered at that the courtiers objected to the King's frequent progresses, and grumbled loudly at the fatigue and expense which each entailed. But on this occasion at least the royal visitors had been ill-pleased.

It had required all the persuasive powers of the Chancellor, Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset, to prevent James' departure in the middle of one of the theatrical performances, so completely worn out was he by the inordinate length of the songs and dances.

Besides this, an incident occurred which greatly annoyed Queen Anne. It is related that "they brought in five or six men almost naked, which were much disliked by the Queen and her ladies." Possibly these were the Sylvanes whose "suits of green close to the body may have suggested nudity."[1] On the whole, the University was unfortunate, at any rate, in the lighter form of entertainment it offered. The King's visit to Oxford had been hard work for everyone concerned.

[1] *James I at Oxford.* Pub. Malone Society.

"God doth know, I need neither hunger to eat nor sleep, but to attend continually upon his Majesty and to undress. . . . But I thank Almighty God all these labours are now overcome and his Majesty this day departed hence with the Queen and Prince towards Windsor."

Arabella and Prince Henry were by this time very good friends, and the Prince was always ready to use his influence in any way Arabella desired. In October, 1605, she wrote him the following letter of thanks:—

"Sir,

"My intention to attend your Highness to-morrow, God willing, cannot stay me from acknowledging, by these few lines, how infinitely I am bound to your Highness for that your gracious disposition, towards me, which faileth not to show itself upon every occasion, whether accidental or begged by me, as this late high favour and grace it hath pleased your Highness to do my kinsman at my humble suit. I must to-morrow to let your Highness understand such motives of that my presumption, as shall make it excusable. For your Highness shall perceive, I both understand with what extraordinary respects suits are to be presented to your Highness; and withal your goodness doth so temper your freshness, as it encourageth both me and many others to hope we may taste the fruits of the one by means of the other. The Almighty make your Highness every way such as Mr. Newton[1] and Sir David Murray[2] (the only intercessors I have used in my suit, or will in any I shall present to your Highness) wish you; and then

[1] The Prince's tutor.

[2] Sir D. Murray was the fifth son of Sir Charles Murray of Cockpool, and elder brother to the first Earl of Annandale. In Scotland he had been one of the Masters of the King's Stable. He was knighted at Greenwich 1605. He was Groom of the Stole and Master of the Robes to Prince Henry. He died about 1615.

shall you be even such as you are; and your growth in virtue and grace with God and man shall be the only alteration we shall pray for. And so in all humility I cease.

"Your Highness' most humble and dutiful

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

When Prince Henry grew older he found that his position became more difficult. As the future king, the courtiers were naturally inclined to pay him a great deal of attention, and the people, charmed by his genial manner, greeted him heartily wherever he went. This popularity was not approved of by James, "and he often showed that he was not pleased to see him advance so fast."

Anne of Denmark appears to have possessed very little influence over this son, and to have done nothing to make him and his father better friends, possibly for the reason that "the Prince's mother had not as much affection for him as for the Duke of York which the Prince had discovered, and sometimes let fall expressions that implied it."

James and Henry had very different natures; the latter, an unusually sharp-sighted boy, was perfectly aware of many of the abuses around him, and was rather inclined to point them out to his father; a course exceedingly inconvenient to careless James. Nor was it any more suited to the policy of the master-mind of the kingdom.

Monsieur de Boderie speaking of this said that the "Earl of Salisbury feared the Prince's ascendance, and that the Prince had little esteem for the Earl."

The French Ambassador had been given considerable facility for studying the Prince.

[1] Quoted from Birch's *Life of Prince Henry*.

"While King James was making a progress . . . extremely out of humour with the sky for not raining and thereby weakening the scent of his dogs, the Prince resided at Richmond, where the French Ambassador, who had been obliged to quit London on account of the plague, and could not follow the king because he made so little stay in any place, was a frequent attendant at his Highness' court."

Henry certainly took after his father in two things, his love of exercise and his love of gambling. He was devoted to hunting, dancing, and tennis, and so great a gambler while still a boy, that he lost over £2000 at tennis, dice, and cards in two years.

Arabella had again been in disgrace with her grandmother, but hoping to end the quarrel she went North to pay her a visit. Before she started, her dread of the reception she was likely to meet with at the old lady's hands grew so great, that she appealed to the King to smooth her path. Armed with James' letter to the Dowager commanding her to receive her granddaughter kindly, Arabella started off with a lighter heart. Apparently the visit was successful, as on her departure she received a gift from her grandmother of £300 and a gold cup.

In November of the same year (1605) England was shaken by the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. One of Arabella's friends, the Earl of Northumberland, was arrested and sent to the Tower, as, being a relative of the conspirator Percy, he had permitted him to enter the ranks of the Gentlemen Pensioners without administering the oath of supremacy, although fully aware that he belonged to the Catholic Church.

In this connection Nicolo Molin forwarded to Venice a naïve observation of his which must have given the

Venetians a curious idea of English judicial proceedings.

"All this makes people think he (the Earl of Northumberland) will be put to death, or at least will never leave the Tower; for it is a most remarkable fact in this country, that if a nobleman is put in the Tower he either loses his life or ends his days there."[1] Foreign representatives had much to learn while they lived in England.

This plot was, of course, a terrible misfortune for the Catholics, and as soon as Parliament met again the laws against them were made more severe. Nor had they ever been very lenient.

"There were many priests lying in prison here, and it seemed certain that in execution of the law they would be put to death, but the king who has frequently declared that he will touch neither goods nor blood for religious opinions, although the goods have for some time past been seized quite as rapaciously as ever in the late Queen's reign, has adopted instead another plan, to send them all to a place about sixty miles away, where they are so closely guarded and so badly treated that they die of want. Two or three are already gone, and the rest will follow unless God aid them. In this way they claim that they do not proceed to the blood penalty, but the execution takes place all the same with even greater cruelty."[2]

Garnet, the famous Jesuit, who was suspected of some knowledge of the Gunpowder Plot, was tried for high treason before a special commission at the Guildhall on March 3rd, 1606.

"He carried himself very gravely and temperately

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.
[2] *Comprehensive History of England.*

and half charmed that immense audience," which held, besides the King, the Lady Arabella. Garnet was executed in May, and "Cecil got the Order of the Garter as a reward for his exertions in the detection of the plot."[1]

After the terrifying experiences of the winter and the bloody deeds of the spring, the visit of Christian the Fourth of Denmark, brother to Queen Anne, was very welcome to James. The King had just received from a Parliament rendered unusually loyal by the late treasons some fairly large subsidies which he proceeded to spend on extravagant entertainments for his guest.

"My Lord,

"After many reports and long expecting, the King of Denmark is come hither; the King of Great Britain (for so I must now, for distinction of two kings in one island, call him) the 16th day of this month, being at Otlands, was assured of his brother's arrival, from which he came in all haste to Greenwich, from whence the next day, with the Prince and such of his nobility as were present, he passed in the Parliament-barge to Gravesend, where he was welcomed by the King of Denmark and banquetted in his ships magnificently. The afternoon they came by the tide up the river, which had never more eyes upon it than then; and no wonder, for since the coming of the Emperor to Henry the Eighth it had never borne two kings. The King would always have his guest take the right hand and go everywhere before him; for that he said he must be absolutely obeyed in his own country. He is a man of goodly person, of stature in no extremes, in face so like his sister, that he who hath seen the one may paint in his fancy the other. He was apparelled in his entry in black cut out on cloth of silver; about his hat he wore a band of gold, wrought in form of a crown, and

[1] *Comprehensive History of England.*

set with precious stones. His first way was to see his sister (who since the death of her daughter Sophia did keep her chamber) the next by the gardens to his lodging, which was in the house of the Tilt-yard, where the King bore him company at supper."[1]

The King of Denmark was certainly not the most sober guest who had visited England, and many are the accounts left of the dissipation of the two kings and their courtiers. The result of the vagueness of many of these reports was that Anne and her ladies were included in the sports of the kings, and so received considerable damage to their reputations.

As a matter of fact neither Anne nor her Court had anything to do with the matter. Shortly before the King of Denmark's arrival, another daughter had been born to James and Anne, and died the day after its birth. Consequently Christian the Fourth made a subdued visit to his mourning sister at Greenwich, where she remained while her husband and brother amused themselves; moreover, it is distinctly stated that her Court remained with her.

The Earl of Salisbury played host during the several days the two kings were at Theobalds.

"Before these royal persons came near the house of Theobalds, there was strewed in the highways abundance of leaves coloured green cut like oaken leaves, on every one of which was written in large Roman letters of gold 'Welcome! Welcome!' which being presented to their Majesties they praised the device and found their welcomes as great to them and theirs as was spoken of. At this most beautiful house after their welcome given by this most bountiful Earl, patron of the famous place, they spent there four nights and

[1] Nichol.

days, where they received many great delights in hunting in the chases and Parks near adjoining where they killed store of deer with great pleasure. Some other times they spent in viewing the admirable pleasure that place affordeth, beholding in great delight the sweet groves, gardens and walks, which with such rare workmanship is so beautiful and for variety so exceedeth, that time stealeth too fast away for the beholders, especially where judicial eyes doth take pleasure therein; so rich, rare, and of such exquisite perfection is that place that many fail in describing the same, but cannot suddenly be wearied with it many times viewing and re-viewing thereof."[1]

That is one picture of the surroundings of the guests; here is another by Sir John Harrington:—

"My good friend: In compliance with your asking now shall you accept my poor account of rich doings. I came here but a day or two before the Danish King came; and, from the day he did come until this time, I have been well-nigh overwhelmed with carousal and sports of all kind.

"The sports began each day in such a manner, and such sort, as well-nigh persuaded me of Mahomet's Paradise.

"We had women and indeed wine too, of such plenty, as would have astonished the sober beholder. Our feasts were magnificent; and the two royal guests did most lovingly entertain each other at table. I think the Dane has strangely wrought on our good English nobles, for those whom I never could get to taste good liquor, now follow the fashion and wallow in brutish delights.

"Ladies abandon their sobriety, and are seen to roll about in intoxication. In good sooth the Parliament did kindly to provide his Majesty so seasonably with

[1] Nichol.

money; for there hath been no lack of good living, shows, sights and banquettings from morn to eve.

"One day a great feast was held; and after dinner the representation of Solomon his Temple and the coming of the Queen of Sheba was made or (as I may better say) was meant to have been made, before their Majesties, by device of the Earl of Salisbury and others. But alas! as all earthly things do fail to poor mortals in enjoyment so did prove our presentment thereof.

"The lady who did play the Queen's part, did carry most precious gifts to both their Majesties, but forgetting the steps arising to the canopy, overset her casket into his Danish Majesty's lap and fell at his feet. . . .

"The entertainment and show went forward, and most of the presenters went backward or fell down; wine did so occupy their upper chambers.

"Hope, Faith, Charity and Victory did however manage to appear and finally Peace entered: but I grieve to tell how great wrath she did discover unto those of her attendants, and much contrary to her semblance, most rudely made war with her olive branch, and laid on the pates of those who did oppose her coming.

"I have much marvelled at these strange pageantries, and they do bring to my remembrance what passed of this sort in our Queen's days of which I was sometime an humble presenter and assistant, but I never did see such lack of good order, discretion, and sobriety as I have now done. I have passed much time in seeing the royal sports of hunting and hawking, where the manners were such as made me devise the beasts were pursuing the sober creation, and not man in quest of exercise and food. I will now, in good sooth, declare to you, who will not blab, that the gunpowder fright is got out of all our heads and we are going on hereabouts as if the devil was contriving every man should

blow himself up, by wild riot, excess, devastations of time and temperance."[1]

Well might Sir John shake his head over the deterioration of the Court, which had become so marked in a few years since Elizabeth's death. The extravagance and dissipation of the courtiers was the subject of many outcries. In the same letter—and it may be this sentence which was thought to include the Queen and her immediate circle, by those who supposed her to be at Theobalds—he says: "The great ladies do go well masked, and indeed it is the only show of their modesty to conceal their countenances; but alack! they meet with such countenance to uphold their strange doings, that I marvel not at ought that happens."

This was worse than the "Rise, pig, and go" days. Little wonder that Arabella withdrew from many of the Court's amusements.

Christian the Fourth of Denmark, when he visited his sister at Greenwich, met the Lady Arabella, and was greatly captivated by her charm and abilities. The King while in England deeply offended the spirited young wife of the Lord Admiral, and Arabella undertook, at Christian's wish, to act as peacemaker. Shortly after the Dane's departure, she wrote to Sir Andrew Sinclair, then at Copenhagen:—

"Sir,—You not only having performed the kindness I required of you, in delivering my letter to their Majesties but returned me so great and unexpected a favour as his Majesty's letters, have doubly bound me to you, and I yield you therefore many great thanks beseeching you to continue in preferring their Majes-

[1] Nichol.

ties' favour to me, for which good office I most desire to become obliged to you, so worthy and reverent a person.

"It may please you now with most humble thanks to present this letter to his Majesty, for whose prosperity none doth more duly and devoutly pray than I; and this [1] to the Queen's Majesty; which is so very a trifle as I was ashamed to accompany it with a letter to her Majesty, and if a piece of work of my own, which I was preparing, had been ready, I had prevented his Majesty's gracious and your kind letter in sending to you, but I was desirous not to omit her Majesty in the acknowledgment of my duty to her royal husband, and therefore loth to stay the finishing of a greater, have sent this little piece of work, in accepting whereof her Majesty's favour will be greater.

"Thus am I bold to trouble you even to these womanish toys whose serious mind must have some relaxation, and this may be one to vouchsafe to descend to these petty offices for one that will ever wish you happiness increase and continuance of honour."[2]

The following reply was written to her on the 26th of August by Sir Andrew:—

"My humble duty being remembered, most worthy lady, it hath pleased both their Majesties to command me to write their Majesties' most gracious recommendations to your Ladyship, and to thank your ladyship for the honest faith it hath pleased your ladyship to bestow on both their Majesties. The queen, in especial, esteems much of that present your ladyship hath sent her Majesty, and says that her Majesty will wear it for your ladyship's sake. The king has commanded me to assure your ladyship that there is no honour, advancement nor pleasure that his Majesty can do your ladyship but he shall do it faithfully and willingly, as one of the best friends your ladyship has in the world.

[1] Some of her own work. [2] Cooper.

Surely I must confess with verity I never heard no prince speak more worthily of a princess than his Majesty does of your ladyship's good qualities and rare virtues, while I say no more, but I shall be a faithful instrument to entertain that holy friendship between his Majesty and your ladyship.

"As touching my Lady Nottingham, the king is now very well content with her ladyship, because her letter was written of a little choleric passion, founded on a feckless report; for his Majesty did never think that her ladyship had offended him, but only those that were the reporters of such foolish words to her. For so had been that he did speak some merry words in jesting, it was not the duty of men of honour (for her ladyship makes mention in her letter) to have reported again to her such things of no effect. And, as for my part Madam, I protest before the living God, I showed duty towards my gracious Master; for if I had not shown him the letter, I had been in danger of a perpetual disgrace.

"So I pray your ladyship, that if any speak to my disadvantage in this matter in discharging my obliged devotion to my master, that your ladyship will answer for me, as for one that has always dedicated himself to do your ladyship all the honour and service that lies in my power, as I confess myself to be perpetually obliged to your ladyship. So in my inviolable, honest devotion I take my leave, and commit your ladyship to the Lord's eternal protection.

"From court at Kioffenhafen the 26th. of August 1606.

"Your ladyship's obliged servant
"to do you tried service
"ANDREW SINCLAIR."[1]

Early in 1607—on the 13th of February—Elizabeth, Dowager Countess of Shrewsbury, died.

[1] Lodge.

"My lord,

"Although my letters seemed not to be ( ) when your lordship wrote to me of the decease of the great and aged Countess your mother, yet I must still when I write remember you, that if I mean to court you and not love you, I can do it as well as I can love you and not court you; this shall therefore only serve to tell you that my lady Arbella is gone towards you; that I have therefore sent the letter to the Countess of Arundel and that I wish you all happiness."[1]

So wrote the Earl of Salisbury to Lord Shrewsbury four days after his stepmother's death. The event does not seem to have brought forth condolences, simply congratulations.

Sir George Chaworth's letter[1] from Newmarket on the 20th of February is even more light-hearted in tone.

"For none is more talked of here than my old Lady of Shrewsbury's departure; which though it be a great and good fortune to your lordship, yet I pray God it may of many be the meanest and worst that may happen to your Lordship."

In dying, the Dowager for once did something that her relatives and well-wishers could heartily approve of.

The Earl had been on a visit to his stepmother very shortly before her death, and had some sort of reconciliation with her.

Arabella must have had a very unpleasant journey, as Rowland Whyte wrote that same month from London: "The frost continues here in a very strange manner; the Thames so hardly frozen that it is made a beaten highway to all places of the city, but all bridges are in great danger upon a thaw."[1] No

[1] Lodge.

wonder Arabella was very indisposed when she reached the journey's end.

In spite of the gold cup and the £300 presented to Arabella not long before, Bess of Hardwicke had not forgiven either her grandchild or her detested son Henry, as her will proved. It was hard on Arabella to be bracketed with the uncle who stood least in favour in the world's eyes as he did in his brother's. Here is the extract from her will and codicil.

"Also I give unto my loving grandchild Arabella Stewart, my chrystal glass framed with silver and gilt and set with lapis and agate, and one sable the head being of gold set with stones, and a white ermine-sable the head being of gold enameled; and all my pearls and jewels which I shall have at my decease except such as shall be otherwise bequeathed by this my last will; and I give to her a thousand pounds in money."

However, in a codicil dated March, 1602, she declared:—

"Forasmuch as she had changed her mind touching her bequests and legacys to her grand-daughter Arabella Stewart and her son Henry Cavendish; and fully determined and resolved that neither her said grand-daughter nor the said Henry Cavendish or either of them shall have any benefit by any such gift or legacy, she therefore declares by this codicil that every gift or legacy etc. by her appointed to them be utterly frustrate, void and of none effect."

Arabella and the King of Denmark had certainly had one taste in common, their love of music. She must have entertained the King with the music of her famous lute-player, and the outcome of the King's pleasure was the following request to Arabella while still at Sheffield:—

"Anne R.

"Well-beloved cousin, We greet you heartily well.

"Udo Gal, our dear brother's the King of Denmark's gentleman servant, hath insisted with us for the licensing your servant, Thomas Culling, to depart from you, but not without your permission, to our brother's service; and therefore we write these few lines unto you, being assured you will make no difficulty to satisfy our pleasure and our dear brother's desires, and so giving you the assurance of our constant favour, with our wishes for the continuance or convalescence of your health, expecting your return, we commit you to the protection of God.

"From Whitehall the 9th of March, 1607."[1]

Something in Arabella's answer to the Queen leads one to suppose she had in some way offended her Majesty—possibly she had departed northwards upon the receipt of her grandmother's death, without considering the royal lady's convenience.

"May it please your Majesty,

"I have received your Majesty's most gracious and favourable token which you have been pleased to send me as an assurance both of your Majesty's pardon and of my remaining in your gracious good opinion, the which how great contentment it hath brought unto me, I find no words to express. And therefore most humbly addressing myself to the answer of your Majesty's pleasure, signified in your letter touching my licensing my servant Culling to depart from me for the service of His Majesty of Denmark, I shall beseech of his Majesty to conceive that although I know well how far more easy it is for so great a prince to command the best musicians in the world than for me to recover one not inferior to this, yet do I most

[1] Harley MSS., 6986, f. 74. Quoted from Cooper.

willingly embrace this occasion whereby I may in effect give some demonstration of my unfeigned disposition to apply myself ever unto all your royal pleasures. And therefore most willingly referring my said servant to your Majesty's good pleasure, and most humbly beseeching that myself may still remain in your gracious and princely favour and protection. And ever beseech Almighty God to grant unto your Majesty all honourable happiness that may be imagined etc.

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

But the Queen did not trust to her influence alone to secure the lute-player for her brother, but urged Prince Henry to write as well about the matter to Arabella, who sent him the following answer.

"May it please your Highness,

"I have received your Highness' letter wherein I am led to understand that the Queen's Majesty is pleased to command Culling, my servant, for the king of Denmark, concerning which your Highness requireth my answer to her Majesty, the which I have accordingly returned by this bearer, referring him to her Majesty's good pleasure and disposition. And although I may have some cause to be sorry to have lost the contentment of a good lute, yet must I confess that I am right glad to have found any occasion whereby to express to her Majesty and your Highness the humble respect which I owe you, and the readiness of my disposition to be conformed to your good pleasures; wherein I have placed a great part of the satisfaction which my heart can receive.

"I have, according to your Highness' direction, signified unto my uncle and aunt of Shrewsbury, your Highness' gracious vouchsafing to remember them, who, with all duty, present their most humble thanks, and say they will ever pray for your Highness' most happy prosperity; and yet my uncle saith he carrieth

[1] Cooper.

the same spleen in his heart towards your Highness that he hath ever done. And so praying to the Almighty for your Highness' felicity, I humbly cease.

"From Sheffield, the 15th. of March. 1607.

"Your Highness'

"most humble and dutiful

"ARBELLA STUART.[1]

"To the Prince his Highness."

Arabella resumed her duties at Court, and the summer passed by in the usual merry manner.

In the August of that year the Venetian Ambassador notes the first visit to England of a man who was afterwards to be mentioned as a suitor for Arabella.

"A Prince of Moldavia came to this country a few days ago. He is one of those many persons who claim a right to the government of that country. He has before this availed himself of the support of the Crown when negotiating with the Turk."

But this pretender probably reserved his proposals till later.

The courtiers seem this year to have something of a holiday from the perpetual hunting. Sir George Chaworth wrote to Lord Shrewsbury:—

"The King is indifferently well pleased with his hunting; and which is to me as great news as ease, is not so earnest, without all intermission or respect of weather be it hot or cold, dry or moist, to go to his hunting and hawking as he was, for though he be as earnest, being at it, as he was, yet is more apt to take hold of a let, and a reasonable wind will blow him to, and keep him at maw all day. I seldom or never, except upon an extraordinary cause, have known a

[1] Harley MSS., 7003.

greater Court of gentlemen than now is; but all of them cannot appease and satisfy the King why a fair white gyr-falcon of his lately flew away, and cannot be heard of again. But the Court will leisure for a season within these two days for that my Lord Haddington[1] and all his favourites, followers and parakells, go shortly to Huntingdon to a match of hunting that he hath there against my Lord of Sheffield's horse."[2]

The most magnificent masque that had yet been given by Queen Anne was held this year. Many were the rumours circulated as to its magnificence.

"We had great hopes of having you here this day, and then I would not have given my part of the masque for any of their places that shall be present for I suppose you and your lady would find easily passage being so befriended; for the show is put off till Sunday, by reason all things are not ready.

"Whatsoever the device may be and what success they may have in their dancing yet you should have been sure to have seen great riches in jewels, when one lady and that under a baroness, is said to be furnished for better than a hundred thousand pounds. And the Lady Arabella goes beyond her, and the Queen must not come behind. On Twelfth Eve, there was great golden play at Court. No gamester admitted that brought not £300, at least. Montgomery played the King's money and won him £150, which he had for his labours. The Lord Monteagle lost the Queen £400; Sir Robert Carey for the Prince £300; the Earl of Salisbury £300; the Lord Buckhurst £500, et sic de ; so that I heard of no winners but the King and Sir Francis Wholly, who got above £800. The King went a hawking journey yesterday to Theobalds, and returns to-morrow.

[1] Sir John Ramsey; he aided the King in the Gowrie plot, killing the Earl of Gowrie with his own hand. For this service he was created Viscount Haddington.

[2] Lodge.

"Above Westminster the Thames is quite frozen over, and the Archbishop came from Lambeth on Twelfth Day over the ice to Court. Many fantastical experiments are daily put in practice as certain youths burnt a gallon of wine upon the ice, and made all the passengers partakers.

"Mr. Fuller came forth of the Tower on Monday, very frolic, and also joyful that he would not lose so much time from home to go about, but would not needs pass over the river on foot, having kissed the rod and made his submission, *modo et formê*.

"We had plenty of preaching here this Christmas. The Bishop[1] and the Dean[2] performed their parts very well and Dr. Pasfield,[3] but your brother Dove swept the Scripture together upon heaps, as one told me in that very phrase. The Archduke's Commissioners are said to be at the Hague already—Aremberg, Richardet, the friar Ney, Vencejler, a Spaniard or two all to the number of seven or eight. There is fasting and prayer in Holland for the good success, as likewise general processions all over on the other side."[4]

Zorzi Giustiani seems to have been quite bewildered with the display.

"I must just touch on the splendour of the spectacle, which was worthy of her Majesty's greatness. The apparatus and the cunning of the stage machinery was a miracle, and the abundance and beauty of the lights immense, and the music and the dance most sump tuous. But what beggared all else and possibly exceeded the public expectation was the wealth of pearls and jewels that adorned the Queen and her ladies, so abundant and splendid that in everyone's opinion no other Court could have displayed such pomp and riches."

[1] Dr. Thomas Davis.
[2] Dr. John Overall.
[3] Dean of Bocking.
[4] *Birch's Letters.*

Possibly; but we will hope that in other countries the Navy was decently paid, and that the sailors with their starving wives and children had not to clamour round the palace gates as happened once or twice in splendid England. It was as well, too, that James was fond of peace and able to keep it, for there was certainly not much money in the country to pay for a war.

Both James and his Queen had a mania for jewels. Pearls were the King's favourites, and there is still preserved a curious list[1] of the large "parcel" of pearls prepared for him in 1606. Certain of the pearls were to be used by his embroiderers, and others were destined to ornament his hose, and others to enrich his saddle. Jewels were favourite presents of his, and he cared little how much he paid for them. On one occasion a single precious stone for the Queen cost him £2500, and, in 1613, his wedding gift of jewels to Lady Frances Howard was valued at £17,000.

The gems were set in many curious ways, often the effect obtained must have been more curious than beautiful.

Here is a copy of a list of certain jewels bought by Queen Anne from Hewit, the Court jeweller, which shows the fashions of the day:—

"For making a brilliant in form of a ship.
For gold and making of a Valentine.
A ring with a heart and a serpent all set about with diamonds.
Two pendents made like Moors' heads and all set with diamonds.
A ring with a single diamond set in a heart betwixt two hands.
Two flies with diamonds.

[1] Quoted in Nichol.

A great ring in the form of a perssed eye and a persses heart all set with diamonds.
One great ring in the form of a frog, price two hundred pounds.
A jewel in the form of a butterfly.
A jewel in the form of a lily set of diamonds.
An anchor set of diamonds.
A jewel in the form of a honeysuckle.
A pair of pendents made like two drums and set with diamonds.
A jewel in form of a horn of abundance set with six rose diamonds & twelve table diamonds.
A ring of a burning heart set with diamonds.
A ring in form of a scallop shell set with a table diamond and opening in the head.
Two rings like black flowers with a table diamond in each.
A ring set with nine diamonds and opening on the head, with the King's picture in that.
One pair of pendents of two hands and two serpents hanging at them."[1]

Arabella had probably inherited many of the jewels which enabled her to make such a brave show in the masque. Still it is not surprising if she was greatly in debt. In 1608 Chamberlain refers to a most extraordinary proceeding on the part of Arabella to obtain money.

He mentions the "muttering of a bill put into the Exchequer or some other court concerning much land, that by reason of pretended bastardy in Queen Elizabeth should descend to divers persons. The chief actors named are Lady Arabella, St. Leger of the West and others. If there be any such thing methinks the whole state should prevent and resent such an indignity."[2]

No more was heard of such a wild scheme, but

[1] Hone's *Every Day Book*. Copied from volume of original accounts.
[2] Cooper.

Arabella certainly had a large number of lawsuits on hand that year, and that she might the better follow their proceedings in peace and quiet she retired to the Monastery of Blackfriars. From there she wrote to her uncle Gilbert:—

"I was much ashamed to be overtaken by your lordship's letter by Mr. Fowler, before I had answered your former but I presume of your pardon for such peccadilloes. Good wishes can never come amiss whether from among caps or beads, and therefor at all adventures I humbly thank your lordship. For want of a nunnery I have for awhile retired myself to the Friars, where I have found by experience this term how much worse they thrive that say 'Go ye to the plough,' than 'Go we to the plough,' so that once more I am setting myself to follow the lawyers most diligently.

"I pray God the cheese I herewith send your lordship prove as good as great (which few of your great lords are by your leave) and truly I hope well of, because the fellow to it, which is tasted here, is so. And as I have sent your lordship some of the stoppingest meat that is, so, I have sent you some of the harpest sallet I ever eat. A great person loveth it well, (as I told your Lordship at my being with you) and that is all I can say in the commendation of it. If you have of it in the country I pray you let me know, that I may laugh at myself for being so busy to get you this. God send you a good stomach and good digestion; shall be the mottoe to these two bodies of sallet and cheese, I hope with the good allowance of all the Impresa-makers by North Trent. And so beseeching the Almighty to send you all honour and happiness I humbly cease.

"From Blackfriars, the 8th. of December 1608.

"Your lordship's niece

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

[1] Add. MSS., 4164, ff. 193*b*, 194.

She was not so busy, however, that she had not time for a little match-making, as the following letter of the Earl and Countess of Arundel to the Earl of Shrewsbury shows:—

"My Lo.

"We could not omit to advertise your Lp. of an accident that will be so welcome to you as that our Cousin Cavendish hath gotten a good wife, who was this Sunday in the morning married to my Lo. of Kinlos his daughter. The matter hath been so secretly carried as it was never heard of any till it was done; and for me I think I was the last; for, at my going to Whitehall after dinner, the Queen told me of it, and says that in the morning John Elveston asked her leave to go to the wedding, which she could not believe till she heard it confirmed by more certainty. The Queen hears that Elveston and (it is thought) my Lady Arbella, were the matchmakers, and that Elveston hath five or six hundred pounds, and that the wench is a pretty red-headed wench and that her portion is seven thousand pounds; and she hears that the youth at first refused her; and my Lo. Cavendish told him Kinlos was well favoured by the Queen, and if he refused it he would make him worse by an hundred thousand pounds; but I am sure the Queen is far from being pleased with all, now it is done. And so, with our service to your L. and my La. we rest.

"Yr. Lop's affectionate son and daughter to command

"ARUNDELL. ARUNDELL."[1]

Mr. Hercy also wrote on this important matter to his master the Earl. His method of obtaining news and the serious way he mentions it is pure comedy.

"This morning about eight of the clock, in the

[1] Lodge.

Chapel of the Rolls, Mr. William Cavendish, the Lord Cavendish his son, was married to the Master of the Rolls his daughter, a young gentlewoman of thirteen years of age or thereabouts. Yesterday about noon, as I am informed, it was concluded between their lordships, whether it should be a match albeit their lordships had spent most part of the forenoon about the same and likewise some conference two or three days before. I daily endeavoured, according to my former letters to your lordship to find out what the Lady Cavendish her suit might be with the Master of the Rolls his lady; and yesterday about five in the afternoon sorted myself near where Mr. Loo, and some of my lord Cavendish his council, were in very earnest and private conference about something for this business as it now seemeth; and albeit I could not then come so near to hear the matter at large yet so near unseen that I heard something to this purpose."[1]

Mr. Hercy was certainly a faithful servant.

Meanwhile, Arabella had been invited to the wedding-dinner, and was probably busy dining while Mr. Hercy recorded his trusty endeavours.

Whether Arabella's lawsuits were successful or not we do not know, but there is a petition of hers among the State Papers[2] dated early in 1609 for licence to export forty thousand hides yearly for thirty-one years, paying a poundage thereon and a yearly rental; and in September of the same year she applied to be given the licensing of brewing and sale of beer and ale in Ireland.

Possibly her fresh supply of money made her particularly lively, but at any rate she wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury one of her amusing letters:—

[1] Nichol.
[2] Cal. State Papers Dom., Vol. lxi., Feb.

"Because I know that your Lo. hath forsaken one recreation that you have liked heretofore, I presume to send you a few idle lines to read in your chair, after you have tired yourself either at affairs or any sport that bringeth weariness; and, knowing you well advertised of all occurrences in serious manner, I make it my end only to make you merry, and show my desire to please you even in playing the fool; for no folly is greater, I know, than to laugh when one smarteth; but that my aunt's divinity can tell you, St. Laurence, deriding his tormentors even upon the gridiron, bad them turn him on the other side, for that he lay on was sufficiently broiled; I should not know how to excuse myself from either insensibleness or contempt of injuries. I find if one rob a house and build a church with the money, the wronged party may go pipe in an ivy leaf for any redress; for money so well bestowed must not be taken from that holy work though the right owner go a-begging. Unto you it is given to understand parables or to command the comment; but if you be of the opinion of the Scribes and Pharisees, I condemn your Lo. by your leave, for an heretic by the authority of Pope Joan; for there is a text saith, you must not do evil that good may come thereof. But now from doctrine to miracles; I assure you within these few days I saw a pair of virginals make good music without help of any hand, but of one that did nothing but warm, not move a glass some five or six foot from them. And if I thought thus great folks, invisibly and far off, work in matters to tune them as they please, I pray you do forgive me, and I hope God will, to whose holy protection I humbly recommend your Lo.

"From Broad Street, the 17th. of June 1609.

"I humbly pray your Lo. to bestow two of the next good parsonages of yours shall fall on me. Not that I mean to convert them to my own benefit, for, though I go rather for a good clerk than for a worldly-wise woman,

I aspire to no degree of Pope Joan but some good ends, whereof this bearer will tell your Lo. one. My boldness showeth how honourably I believe of your disposing such livings.

"Your Lo. niece
"ARBELLA STUART.

"To the right honourable my very good uncle the Earl of Shrewsbury."[1]

In 1609 Arabella paid several visits in the North of England. As usual, she had no ready money, which was absolutely necessary for her journey, so that she was forced to borrow the required amount, pledging her jewels as security.

However pleasant the change of scene may have been, the dangers and difficulties of seventeenth-century travel must greatly have decreased the pleasure. Not only did accidents occur with unpleasant frequency to carriages, servants, and horses, causing delay and expense, but the roads were often impassable for several hundred yards, and the unfortunate traveller was forced to wait until labourers could be found willing to repair the road —at the traveller's charge, be it observed. There could be no doubt of the excitement of a trip in those days. What tempted Arabella to undertake the journey at that time when her exchequer was depleted it is difficult to imagine. Following the custom of her day, she stayed, wherever possible, at the houses of friends and relatives. She travelled with a very numerous suite, as the Earl's orders for her reception at Sheffield show.[2] For the Earl's preparations rather suggested the entertainment of a royal princess travelling in state than of his cousin. A month or so later Arabella travelled with the Earl to

[1] Lodge.
[2] Costello.

Buxton, where he provided a great banquet.[1] Certainly Arabella's state was emphasized on this journey, rather unwisely. It was probably her uncle who during this visit suggested that she should petition the King to grant her a monopoly of the sale of wines and usquebaugh in Ireland to add to her yearly income. This the King complied with immediately after her return to London.

Arabella certainly needed to recoup the charges of her journey. The fees demanded by servants of every degree in each household were inordinate. The payments of daily board wages[2] to coachmen, litter and sumpter men, the rewards given to messengers carrying letters and orders hither and thither, the alms to the poor who clustered round the church doors or sat begging by the city's gates, the repairs of roads and coaches, the hire of horses, the replacement of goods damaged, and the gratuities given to persons of every degree who offered the traveller the slightest attention, make a formidable total. Arabella's journey appears to have been a triumph. Whenever she entered a town to stop at the inn there, her reception was enthusiastic. The church bells rang in her honour, orations were presented to her; a trumpeter pranced before her to announce her coming.

It would be charmingly romantic, this old-world welcome with its respectful homage, its gorgeous flourish of trumpets, had it been gratuitous. When more than a century and a half later Bath revived the same custom and received its visitors with bell-ringing and music, more than one great but impecunious guest slunk meanly into the city rather than face the gratuities expected of them. Arabella was not so fortunate.

[1] Lodge. [2] Cooper.

At any rate, the whole journey cost Arabella £323 18s. It is no wonder that travelling was not frequently indulged in.

The arrival of Lady Arabella at Sheffield must have caused a great flutter among the household. Judging by the Earl's breathless note to one of his servants he rather shared in the agitation.

"Harry Butler,

.. "Tell Richard the cook that I would have him stay at Sheffield till I come thither which shall be God willing, to-morrow at night. Tell Moorhouse that my Lady Arabella will be at Sheffield some day this week as I verily think. Fish enough must be watered; for there will be an extreme great number in the Hall every day. Fat beef and fat muttons must be had and the beef in time killed and powdered. Fat capons be provided and reserved till then and everything else that either Richard or Moorhouse can provide or think useful: and Wyngfield's best advice to be had and followed. So in extreme haste I end.

"Send away this letter to be safely delivered to Leygh speedily wheresoever he be for it requireth great haste. Send the other letter to Sir Charles this day also.

"At Tankeysley this Wednesday 29th. Aug. 1609.

"G. Sh."[1]

On her return to Whitehall, Arabella withdrew as much as possible from her friends and remained whenever possible in her own rooms. There is no doubt that for some time she had felt her position deeply and that she had by this time lost all faith in the King's word. In the winter of 1609–10 she fell into disgrace. It has always been conjectured that the reason must

[1] Hunter's *Hallamshire*.

have been connected either with some rash proposal of marriage to which she lent a too willing ear, or her importunity for a better income.

Now the letters of Marc' Antonio Correr have disclosed the truth and with it a most extraordinary story.

"His Majesty had a hint last week that she (Arabella) intended to cross the sea with a Scot named Douglas (Sir George Douglas) and had some idea of marrying him. He accordingly sent his Captain of the Guard and the baroness, his wife, to take Lady Arbella from the house of one of the Seymour family under pretext of friendship and an invitation to sup with them. They conveyed her to the Palace where she was placed under guard several days. Douglas too was arrested and some of her servants and waiting maids and seals were put on her effects. She is now at liberty, however, which is not the case with the others. She answered well to the King before the Council. For long she has been living far from Court, and in great melancholy, both on account of the little esteem in which she was held and because her income is insufficient. She is engaged in many suits for the recovery of her patrimony. She has on this and other occasions petitioned for support and the King will give it her." [1]

The Ambassador's first report is inaccurate in several particulars, and a little later, after a complete investigation of the affair, he carefully corrected it. The statement that she "has been living far from Court" was probably occasioned by her last journey to the North, which was misinterpreted by the Ambassador.

Here is his second letter on January 28th, 1610:—

"Lady Arabella's troubles are caused by a consignment of money which her excellency made at Constantinople for a Moldavian Prince and by Douglas'

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers, 1607–10.

intention to go to the port with instructions on the matter. The Moldavian was many months ago at the English Court, and as I hear, with the king's consent, negotiated about a marriage with the lady, the conclusion thereof to depend on his making good his claim to his state. With that object in view he obtained a promise from his Majesty besides other favours through the English Ambassador in Constantinople, that he would be furnished with 4,000 ducats which were never paid him."

This is really a most extraordinary statement. This "Moldavian Prince" was a pretender, an adventurer apparently, by name Stephen Bogdan. He certainly came to England and he certainly asked help of James. As we know, it was never the King's way to refuse anyone definitely, he was always carefully ambiguous even when his diplomacy served no purpose. It is very possible that he may have consented to Bogdan's proposal regarding Arabella as the "conclusion thereof was to depend on his making good his claim to his state," which James most probably knew to be very unlikely.

The King's part is explainable, but what Arabella was doing to consider such a proposal is another thing. But did she? She was at the time very dissatisfied, and determined to obtain a larger income. Moreover it was not long before she accepted an English youth as her husband, and one she vowed through every trouble that she loved. This was William Seymour, whom in all probability she knew well at this time. The Venetian mentions that she was visiting at the house of a member of the Seymour family at the time of her arrest. This could not be the Earl and Countess of Hertford as both were in the country, and Arabella

is supposed not to have been on good terms with the Earl. But Francis Seymour, brother of William, certainly had a house in London at this time. At all events, it does not seem very likely that Arabella would think seriously of allying herself to an adventurer of extremely precarious fortune. But knowing by this time the King's fears regarding her marriage, is it possible that she played at desiring Bogdan for a husband, that she might draw public attention to herself, alarm the King, and suggest to him the advisability of satisfying her other demands so that she should return to her former contented life? At all events, Bogdan journeyed to Venice and gave out publicly his engagement to Arabella. The Venetian Ambassador continues his letter with another startling statement:—

"After he left England, it is now asserted, he married in Venice. In reply to a question on the subject of religion Lady Arabella said that she had never any intention to become a Catholic but her troubles and worries have prevented her from attending church for some time. She complained loudly of the small account in which she is held, and recalled the frequent promises of the king. His Majesty has taken it all in good part and has ordered that she be repaid for the moneys remitted to Constantinople. Her pension will be increased. All the same she publicly declares she is not satisfied. She claims the restoration of her patrimony and asks to be married or at least to depart and choose a husband. Douglas has free access to her Excellency's apartments. She was present these days at the Barriers and other public functions."

But, by the middle of September, he writes:—

"The Lady Arabella is confined to her own apartments but not under ward. She neither leaves her

rooms however, nor is she visited except by intimates. Douglas is also at liberty which is a sure sign that the affairs of the lady are not in danger. One of her maids however is still in prison, it is said because of a too bold answer to the Lords of Council, for she said briefly and firmly that neither ought their Lordships to enquire into lady's secrets nor was it her place to lay them bare; had she heard of anything hostile to the King she would have withdrawn from the house, but it was no business of hers to tell tales. Lady Arbella's replies are considered very prudent and wise. She would neither affirm nor deny that she had thought of leaving the kingdom; she merely said that ill-treated as she was by all, it was only natural that she should think of going. I am told that the King will increase her income."

A month later he says:—

"Lady Arabella is seldom seen outside her rooms and lives in greater dejection than ever. She complains that in a certain comedy the playwright introduced an allusion to her person and the part played by the Prince of Moldavia. The play was suppressed. Her Excellency is very ill-pleased and shows a determination to secure the punishment of certain persons we don't know who."

Arabella partly obtained her purpose, as the Ambassador notes on February 25th, 1610.

"His Majesty thinking it undesirable to drive the Lady Arabella to farther despair has given her 10,000 crowns to pay her debts and has also increased her annual pension, and instead of eight dishes she is now allowed eighteen.

"All the same there is still much suspicion about, partly because she is not satisfied and is a lady of high

spirit and ability, partly because the mal-contents may some day use her as a pretext for their schemes."

Arabella had obtained a better position for herself, but the old fears about her had been revived. It would have been better for her had she remained poor and unregarded.

CHAPTER IX

THE first use Arabella made of her restoration to favour was to discuss her future prospects with the King. James heard her sympathetically and professed himself ready to aid her in any way that lay in his power. He even went further, and gave Arabella a definite promise to the effect that he would sanction her marriage to anyone she desired, *provided* that the bridegroom was a subject of his kingdom and not a foreigner.

What induced James to make such a promise it is difficult to say. He had always shown himself inimical to any suitor for Arabella.

To have given such a pledge he must entirely have forgotten the alarm he experienced in 1603, when rumour had allied his cousin to a member of the Hertford family. Now, in 1610, the Seymours were still in existence, and one at least of them was of marriageable age and passed his days at Court.

After events were to prove the unreasoning terror James suffered over the alliance; what, then, possessed the usually cautious monarch to give such a pledge? But that he did give it, he never denied, and on his word Arabella staked her happiness.

No record remains to show where Arabella and William Seymour, the second son of Lord Beauchamp, met. It may have been at Oxford, where it will be remembered he attracted the notice of Prince Henry during the disputations held in the latter's honour at

Magdalen, to which college both youths belonged. Or it may not have been until William Seymour came to Court; nor was his friendship with Arabella outwardly so great that it attracted the attention of the onlookers at any time.

One letter of Arabella's to William Seymour, and one alone, is extant; none of his in return. It is easy, however, to see from her single letter and her actions that love was the motive for the marriage on Arabella's side. There is very little recorded of William in 1610; much later he was to become one of the principal figures in the Court of Charles the First. It is then that we learn that he was universally liked and respected. An upright, honourable man, handsome and serious, loving "his book above all other exercises."[1]

Perhaps it was this "love of his book" that first attracted Arabella's notice, but the friendship, however it began, ended on the second of February in Seymour asking Arabella to marry him.

It was a daring proposition for William to make, and he must have known perfectly what the world would say regarding it. He at that time was barely twenty-three, a second son, unknown, fortuneless, as he himself confesses, with, if he desired riches, power, and an honoured name, only himself to rely on for the securing of them.

Arabella was thirty-five, of no fortune, deeply in debt; but she was cousin to the King of England, heiress to the throne should James outlive his children; an unlikely eventuality, but one which was able then to perturb him.

For the first step in an unknown young gentleman's career his marriage with the King's cousin was quite

[1] Clarendon.

satisfactory. He it is who in the moment of trouble ascribes some such motive to himself, but it has been argued that he would be likely, at such a time, to give the King the reason that would prove most acceptable to him. Why the King should have preferred young Seymour to marry Arabella from a purely mercenary motive rather than a higher one is left in obscurity. No one has ever been able to discover Seymour's sentiments with regard to Arabella, and probably no one ever will. His actions at the time alone remain to guide us now, and his actions were contradictory and unsatisfactory. One thing, however, is certain, both he and Arabella relied on the King's promise, or they would have guarded their betrothal from discovery. As it was, the news reached James little more than a week after the event took place.

Beaulieu wrote to Trumbull on February 15th:—

"The Lady Arabella who (as you know) was not long ago censured for having without the king's privity entertained a notion of marriage, was again these few days apprehended, in the like treaty with my Lord of Beauchamp's second son, and both were called and examined at the Council about it. What the matter will prove I know not; but these affectations of marriage in her do give some advantage to the world of impairing the reputation of her conduct and virtuous disposition."[1]

Naturally both Arabella and Seymour urged the King's promise in their defence.

Of the two, Arabella played the leading part in the examination; she was indignant and reproachful by turns; her wit, always ready to aid her, became bitter and mocking.

[1] Winwood's *Memorials.*

William throughout seems to have taken the second place. When requested, he made his confession, pleaded what excuses he could and then held his peace. Unlike Arabella, he had no wish to astonish King and Council by his wit and brilliant defence. His confession was afterwards put into writing. It is a curious document, with its succinct account of the slight courtship of the lovers, and the cold motive he offers as an extenuating reason.

"May it please your good lordships since it is your pleasure which to me shall always stand for a law, that I should truly relate under my hand those passages which have been between the noble Lady Arbella and myself I do here in these rugged lines truly present the same to your lordships' favourable censure that thereby his most excellent Majesty may be by your lordships fully satisfied of my duty and faithful allegiance which shall ever be a spur to me to expose my life and all my fortunes to the extremest danger for his Highness' service that I will never attempt anything which I shall have certain foreknowledge will be distressing unto him. I do therefore humbly confess, that when I conceived that noble lady might with his Majesty's good favour and without offence make her choice of any subject of this kingdom, which conceit was begotten in me by a general report after her ladyship's last being called upon before your lordships that it might be myself being but a younger brother, and sensible of mine own good, unknown to the world, of man's estate, not born to challenge anything by my birthright, and therefore my fortunes to be raised by mine own endeavour, and she a lady of great honour and virtue and as I thought of great means; I did plainly and honestly endeavour to gain her in marriage which is God's ordinance common to all. Assuring myself, if I could effect the same with his Majesty's

most gracious favour and liking without which I resolved never to proceed that thence would grow the first beginning to all my happiness, and therefore I boldly intruded myself into her ladyship's chamber in the court on Candlemas Day last at what time I imparted my desire unto her, which was entertained, but with this caution on either part, that both of us resolved not to proceed to any final conclusion, without his Majesty's most gracious favour and liking first obtained; and this was our first meeting. After that we had a second meeting at Mr. Brigg's house in Fleet Street, and then a third at Mr. Baynton's, at both which we had the like conference and resolution as before; and the next day save one after the last meeting I was convented before your lordships, when I did then deliver as much as I have now written before them; and now protesting before God upon my duty and allegiance to his most excellent Majesty and as I desire to be retained in your lordships' good opinion, there is neither *promise of marriage, contract, or any other engagement whatsoever between her ladyship and myself, nor was ever any marriage* by me or her intended, unless his Majesty's gracious favour and approbation might have been first gained therein: which we resolved to obtain before we would proceed to a conclusion. Whereof I humbly beseech your lordships to inform his Majesty that by your good means, joined to the clearness of an unspotted conscience and a loyal heart to his Highness, I may be acquitted in his just judgment from all opinion of any disposition in me to attempt anything distasteful or displeasing to his Majesty, as one well knowing that the great wrath and disfavour of my sovereign will be my confusion. Whereas his gracious favour and goodness towards me may be the advancement of my poor fortunes. And thus my lords, according to your commands, I have made a true relation of what was required, humbly referring the favourable construction thereof to your

Lordships, having for the further hastening of the truth and ever to bind me thereunto thereafter subscribed my name, the 20th. of February 1609 [10].

"WILLIAM SEYMOURE."[1]

James, strangely enough, appeared convinced of the genuineness of Seymour's words, and decided to dismiss both culprits with a prohibition against their marriage.

"As we reported the King is anxious that the marriage of the Lady Arabella with the nephew[2] of the Earl of Hertford should not go forward, so as to avoid the union of these two houses, who are the nearest to the Crown. After examination separately they were both summoned before the King, the Prince and the Council and ordered to give up all negotiations for marriage. Lady Arabella spoke at length, denying her guilt and insisting on her unhappy plight. She complained again that her patrimony had been conceded by the King to others. She had sold two rings he had given her. She was then required to beg the King's pardon, but replied that seeing herself deserted, she had imagined she could not be accused if she sought a husband of her own rank. All the same, if error she had made she humbly begged pardon. This did not satisfy the K., he demanded an absolute confession of wrong and an unconditional request for forgiveness. That she complied with and received fresh promises of money and leave to marry provided the King approved."[3]

So Arabella and William found themselves again at liberty. As far as increasing his cousin's income was concerned the King certainly kept his word, as on the 22nd of March a licence was granted to Arabella (and others) to appoint such persons as she thought fit to

[1] Harley, 7003, f. 59. [2] This should, of course, be grandson.
[3] Correr to Doge. March 4th, 1610.

keep taverns for the sale of wines and usquebaugh in Ireland during twenty-one years.[1] This, the Venetian Ambassador mentions on April 1st, would add 4000 ducats to her income.

The spring passed on slowly, and in the early part of June the last brilliant ceremony at which Arabella was to assist took place. This was the creation of Prince Henry, Prince of Wales. It was attended with all the splendid pomp and pageants that the mirth-loving Court of James and Anne could desire.

On May 31st Prince Henry journeyed to Richmond and there spent the night, as it had been arranged that he should, on the following day, make a formal entry into London.

"He took barge to return again to London, attended only with some few barges of his own followers, and such noblemen and others as accompanied them thither the day before. Passing softly down the Stream he was severally encountered by divers lords, which came to meet him on the way; the Thames began soon to float with boats and barges, hasting from all parts to meet him, and the shores on either side, where conveniency of place would give way to their desires, swarmed with multitudes of people which stood waiting with greedy eyes to behold his triumphant passage.

"About eleven of the clock understanding that the tide was fallen so low, as there would not be convenient room for all the barges in his train to go orderly down, notwithstanding his first appointment was to have come to London about noon, and dinner prepared for him accordingly at Whitehall, he made stay at Barne Elms, and there landing refreshed himself in an arbour by the water side, and took a short repast of such sweetmeats and other things as could there be provided on the sudden.

[1] See Calendar Dom. State Papers.

"By this time the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, with the several companies of the city, honourably furnished and appointed, and disposed in fair order were ready attending with a great train and sumptuous show, to receive his highness at Chelsea, their barges decked with banners, streamers and ensigns, and sundry sorts of loud sounding instruments aptly placed among them.

"There were also two artificial sea-monsters, one in fashion of a whale, the other like a dolphin, with persons richly apparelled sitting upon them, who, at the meeting and parting of the Lord Mayor and his company with the Prince, were to deliver certain speeches unto him."[1]

The procession landed and went to Whitehall. The King and Queen, the little Duke of York, and Lady Elizabeth stood in the window of the Privy Gallery to watch their coming. The ceremony of investiture took place on the Monday following, when the Earl of Shrewsbury carried the cup and coronet for the Prince. Two days after there was a great sea-fight and a fire-work display upon the Thames, but the most gorgeous entertainment was given on June 5th by the Queen in her son's honour. This was *Tethy's Festival; or, the Queen's Wake*, a masque devised by Samuel Daniels.

The Queen took the rôle of Tethy, wife of Oceanus, and each of her attendant nymphs represented a river. An amusing account of the dresses worn by the nymphs, of whom Arabella was one, is given by Nichol.

"Their head-tire was composed of shells and coral, and from a great murex shell in the form of the crest of an helm, hung a thin waving veil. The upper

[1] From a tract in Somers' *Collection of Historical Tracts*, printed in 1610.

garments had the bodys of sky coloured taffeta, for lightness, all embroidered with maritime inventions. Then had they a kind of half skirt of cloth of silver embroidered with gold, all of the ground work cut out for lightness which hung down full and cut in points. Underneath that came a base (of the same as was the body) beneath the knee. Their long skirts was wrought with lace waved about like a river, and on the banks sedge and seaweeds, all of gold. Their shoulders were all embroidered with the work of the short skirt of cloth of silver, and had cypress spangled, ruffed out and fell in a ruff above the elbow. The under sleeves were all embroidered as the bodys. Their shoes were of satin richly embroidered with the work of the short skirt."[1]

A contemporary letter gives a good idea of the performance and of the fatigues attendant on it.

"The next day was graced by the most glorious masque which was double. In the first, came first in the little Duke of York, between two great sea slaves, the chiefest of Neptune's servants, attended upon by twelve little ladies, all of them the daughters of Earls and Barons.

"By one of the slaves a speech was made unto the King and Prince expressing the conceit of the Masque, by the other a sword, worth 20,000 crowns, at the least, was put into the Duke of York's hands, who presented the same unto the Prince his brother, from the first of those ladies who were to follow in the next Masque; this done the Duke returned into his former place in the midst of the stage and the little ladies performed their dance to the amazement of all the beholders, considering the tenderness of their years, and the many intricate changes of the dance, which was so disposed that which way soever the changes went the little Duke was still found in the midst of these little dancers.

[1] Nichol.

"These slight skirmishers having done their devoir, in came the Princesses. First the Queen; then the Lady Elizabeth's grace; then the Lady Arbella, the Countesses of Arundel, Derby, Essex, Dorset and Montgomery; the Lady Haddington, the Lady Elizabeth Grey, Lady Windsor, Lady Catherine Petre, Elizabeth Guildford and Mary Winton. By the time these had done, it was high time to go to bed, for it was within half an hour of the sun's not setting, but rising. Howbeit, a further time was to be spent, in viewing and scrambling at one of the most magnificent banquets that ever I have seen.

"The Ambassadors of Spain, of Venice and of the Low Countries were present at this, and all the rest of these glorious sights, and, in truth, so they were."[1]

Arabella was not so engrossed in pageants that she could find no time for love-making. She, at any rate, had never regarded her promise to the King as serious; on the contrary, she was prepared to continue her courtship after the examination, precisely as she had done before it.

Seymour, on the other hand, seems to have been inclined to cry off now that he was assured, that instead of furthering his ambitions, the marriage would only bring upon him the wrath of the King.

A written message, but unsigned and undated, was sent by him to Arabella.[2] It pleads the danger in which such a marriage would place them, as excuse for the suggestion that it should be given up and one more suited to Arabella's worth arranged.

This does not show Seymour as possessed of an ardent spirit. But, unhappily for herself, Arabella

[1] Costello. Letter to Mr. Trumbull from Mr. John Finnett afterwards Master of the Ceremonies.

[2] In the possession of the Marquis of Bath. See *Report (Third) of Historical MSS. Commissioners.*

loved him, in spite of his avowed coldness. Naturally, perhaps, she who had known so little happiness, was not easily to be parted from it once it had stepped into her life.

Unknown now what arguments she used, but her lukewarm lover finally consented to a secret wedding ceremony. All this cannot have taken place without many personal interviews, and it is extraordinary that these should have been possible.

After the public prohibition of her marriage all eyes must have been fixed curiously on Arabella. Her relatives knowing her headstrong and impulsive spirit must have been alarmed, and, warned by her behaviour already, it is strange that they did not watch her, and, if possible, prevent her from further rashness. Oddly enough, no letters remain that give any hint as to the Shrewsburys' attitude. But, once the wedding was accomplished and Arabella in disgrace, the Earl did his best to help his niece, and no word of blame came from his pen. Later, the Countess showed a very active sympathy with Arabella's misfortunes, but this was engendered partly by her ambition and partly by her religious views, and need not necessarily have been shared by the Earl.

Is it possible that the Shrewsburys knew and aided Arabella's intentions? Their quiescent attitude after the event lends colour to the inquiry.

Seymour was differently circumstanced. His grandfather, who appears to have made himself responsible for William's maintenance, lived many miles from London and was likely to know very little of his grandson's proceedings. Once aware of them, he appeared genuinely annoyed and, it must be confessed, frightened. As to Lord Beauchamp, William's father, his attitude

By permission.] *[Photo Oxford University Press.*

WILLIAM SEYMOUR, FIRST MARQUIS OF HERTFORD.

(Hope Collection of Engravings.)

in the matter is unknown, as there is absolutely no mention of him at that time at all. The only other member of the Seymour family likely to be aware of William's plans was Francis, and that he neither knew of, or was in sympathy with, William's marriage he afterwards proved.

On June 21st Seymour sought out his great friend and confidant Edward Rodney, and begged him to be present at the ceremony. Late that night the two young men arrived in Arabella's rooms in Greenwich Palace, where they patiently sat and awaited the wedding morning. Very early on Friday, June 22nd, William and Arabella were married.

"He confessed that upon Friday was fortnight he was married unto the Lady Arbella at Greenwich in the chamber of the said Lady Arbella there. That there was present one Blagen, son to the Dean of Rochester, who was the minister that married them; there were also present one Edward Rodné; Crompton, gentleman usher to the Lady Arbella; Edward Kyrton, and Edward Reve; Mrs. Biron and Mrs. Bradshaw, two servants to the Lady Arbella. The marriage was on the Friday morning aforesaid between three and four of the clock, but without any licence as he confesseth."[1]

Early in July the marriage was discovered, and on the 8th of that month both Arabella and Seymour were arrested.

"The great match which was lately stolen betwixt the Lady Arbella and young Beauchamp, provides them both of safe lodgings. The lady close prisoner at Sir Thomas Parry's house at Lambeth and her husband in the Tower."[2]

[1] Seymour's Confession. Tanner MSS., Bodleian Library.
[2] Sir Dudley Carleton to Sir Ralph Winwood.

History had strangely repeated itself. William Seymour, undeterred by the imprisonment of his grandfather, had dared to risk, and for the same reason, his sovereign's wrath.

James was, naturally enough, furious at the disobedience just shown to his commands. Moreover, he either was, or feigned to be, overcome with anxiety as to how such a marriage should affect his own and his children's welfare. Birch states that it "raised the jealousy of the king."[1]

The Venetian Ambassador gives a rather curious account of the demeanour of Arabella and William Seymour at their examination.

"A few days ago Lady Arabella concluded her marriage with the second son of the son of the Earl of Hertford in spite of the King's injunction to abstain. Both were summoned before the Council. The young man who was brought in first denied the fact; she however freely confessed it and excused the denial of her husband on the score of fear. She endeavoured to demonstrate that neither by laws divine nor human laws could she be prevented. But the King took offence and committed her to the custody of a gentleman who lives a short way out of the city and her husband to the Tower. A law forbidding under pain of 'loesa majestas' and rebellion the descendants of blood royal to intermarry without leave is a serious injury to her case. This law was passed to meet the case of the Earl of Hertford, grandfather of the youth whose father was secretly born in the Tower; and for this reason they say that the Lady Arabella has been separated from her husband; rumour says she will not be so easily set free."[2]

[1] *Life of Prince Henry.* Birch.
[2] Calendar of Venetian State Papers. July 28th, 1610.

The Ambassador was quite right, James had no intention of permitting Arabella to regain her liberty. Nor was it an unnatural impulse of the King's to punish the culprits severely, in the moment of anger that followed on the discovery of the stolen match. James, who looked upon himself as next only to God in power and might, he, who of all European monarchs possessed the most arrogant ideas of the scope of his kingly office, was not—nay, could not be, for the example's sake—likely to ignore such flagrant disobedience. Probably, both William and Arabella had counted on temporary disgrace, possibly banishment from Court or even short imprisonment. What they had not allowed for was a passion that as it cooled hardened into obstinacy. Not only had the King been disobeyed since his prohibition, it seems probable that he had been deceived before it. Seymour had protested, and his protestation had influenced James, and largely aided the culprit to liberty, that no pledge of any sort existed between himself and Arabella.

How was it, then, that Rodney when examined before the Council could speak of some sort of binding promise, which he seems to suggest was the cogent reason for the marriage?

"About Whitsuntide meeting with Mr. Seymour at Lambeth, amongst other speech, which he used to me, it pleased him to acquaint me with his resolution concerning his marriage, but so sparingly and in such general terms, that he never spake unto me of the means, which he used in the re-obtaining of her love, nor once mentioned unto me either letter, token, or message, or ought else which had passed between them, only, that since it pleased her to entertain the matter having the King's consent to make her own choice

without exception and since he found himself bound in conscience by reason of a former pledging of his faith unto her, that he resolutely intended it, engaging me by oath unto him, that I should not reveal it, until he absolved me, seeming to me to fear no other let or obstacle than his grandfather, my Lord of Hertford. From that time till the marriage day, he used no more words to me concerning it, at what time he requested me to accompany him to her chamber at Greenwich, to be a witness of the marriage there to be solemnized to which I consented; all this while nothing doubting of the King's consent. Whither we came about twelve o'clock at night, there staying till next morning at which time they were married. I came away to London.

"This is briefly the declaration which I made, differing in nothing but prolixity; leaving out of some excusing words which doubled the quantity.—EDWARD RODNEY."[1]

If Rodney spoke the truth, then Seymour lied before the Council, to acquit himself and trick the King, who was the last man to forgive any injury to his dignity.

So William went to the Tower and Arabella to Lambeth. But the latter's imprisonment with Sir Thomas Parry was by no means as hard as it might easily have been. She was allowed the freedom of the house and garden, and although access of any from the outer world was strictly forbidden; certain of her own servants were allowed to remain to wait on her.

The order of the Council to Sir Thomas ran as follows:—

"After our very hearty commendations. Whereas it is thought fit that the Lady Arabella should be restrained of her liberty, and choice is made of you to receive her and lodge her in your house;—These are therefore to give you notice thereof, and to require

[1] Add. MSS., 4161, f. 26.

you to provide convehient lodging for her to remain under your charge and custody, with one or two of her women to attend her, without access of any other persons until his Majesty's pleasure be further known. And this shall be unto you for a sufficient warrant.

"From the Court of Whitehall this 9th. of June 1610.

"Your very loving friends

"R. CANT.	J. SUFFOLKE.
"T. ELLESMERE.	R. SALISBURY.
"NOTTINGHAM.	E. WORCESTER."[1]

Arabella employed the days at Lambeth in writing letters and petitions. Unfortunately few of the latter are dated, so that it is impossible to know with certainty where to place them. The following was, however, probably one of the earliest :—

"TO THE KING

"May it please your most excellent Majesty I do most heartily lament my hard fortune that I should offend your Majesty the least, especially that whereby I have long desired to merit of your Majesty, as appeared before your Majesty was my Sovereign. And though your Majesty's neglect of me, my good liking of this good gentleman that is my husband, and my fortune, drew me to a contract before I acquainted your Majesty, I humbly beseech your Majesty to consider how impossible it was for me to imagine it could be offensive to your Majesty, having few days before given me your royal consent to bestow myself on any subject of your Majesty's (which likewise your Majesty had done long since). Besides, never having been prohibited any, or spoken to for any, in this land, by your Majesty, these seven years that I have lived in your Majesty's house, I could not conceive that your Majesty regarded my marriage at all; whereas if your

[1] Cooper.

Majesty had vouchsafed to tell me your mind, and accept the freewill offering of my obedience, I would not have offended your Majesty, of whose gracious goodness I presume so much, that if it were now as convenient in a worldly respect, as malice makes it seem, to separate us, whom God hath joined, your Majesty would not do evil that good might come thereof, nor make me, that have the honour to be so near your Majesty in blood, the first precedent that ever was, though our princes may have left some as little imitable, for so good and gracious a King as your Majesty as David's dealing with Uriah.

"But I assure myself, if it please your Majesty in your wisdom to consider thoroughly of my cause, there will no solid reason appear to debar me of justice and your princely favour, which I will endeavour to deserve while I breathe."[1]

But apparently Arabella had little hope of speedily appeasing the King's displeasure. As early as July 16th, 1610, she wrote to her uncle, Lord Shrewsbury, begging him to help those servants with whom she was obliged to part and making arrangements for the disposal of her horses.

"LAMBETH *July 16th.* 1610.

"If it please your lordship,

there are divers of my servants with whom I thought never to have parted whilst I lived, and none that I am willing to part with. But since I am taken from them, and know not how to maintain, either myself or them, being utterly ignorant how it will please his Majesty to deal with me, it were better to put them away now than towards winter. Your Lordship knows the greatness of my debts and my unableness to do for them, either now or at Michaelmas. I beseech your Lordship let me

[1] Harley MSS.

know what hope you can give me of his Majesty's favour, without which I and all mine must live in great discomfort and make me so much bound to you as both of yourself and by means of any that you take to be my friends or pity me, to labour the re-obtaining of his Majesty's favour to me. So humbly thanking your Lordship for the care it pleaseth you to have of me and mine, and for your honourable offer, I humbly cease. From Lambeth, the 16th July. 1610.

"The poor prisoner, your niece

"ARBELLA SEYMOUR.

"The bay gelding and the rest are at your Lordship's commandment."[1]

She certainly had a large household to dispose of as a memorial makes mention of no less than thirty-two servants. Lord Shrewsbury returned a helpful answer and Arabella wrote again to thank him.

"I acknowledge myself much bound to your lordship for your care in disposing of my servants, but I cannot guess what to do with any of them till I know how his Majesty is inclined towards me. Therefore I again very humbly and earnestly beseech your lordship to move his Majesty on his return to be gracious unto me. That according to his Majesty's answer and disposition towards me, I may take order for my servants or anything else concerning me. So with humble thanks I take my leave.

"From Lambeth the 19th. of July.

"P.S.—I pray your lordship remember me very humbly to my aunt."[1]

Arabella was by no means deserted by her friends now that she had fallen under the King's displeasure. Queen Anne did what she could in her whilom maid of honour's behalf, as indeed she was always ready to do for any in misfortune.

[1] Cooper.

Arabella possessed another staunch ally—one moreover able to further her letters and petitions to the Queen—in her cousin, Lady Jane Drummond.

This lady[1] was a daughter of Patrick, third Lord Drummond. She was Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Anne, and governess to the royal children.

During her imprisonment at Lambeth Arabella wrote the following letter to Lady Jane:—

"Good cousin,

"I pray you do me the kindness to present this letter of mine in all humility to her Majesty; and with all my most humble and dutiful thanks for the gracious commiseration it pleaseth her Majesty to have of me as I hear to my great comfort. I presume to make suit to her Majesty, because if it please her Majesty to plead for me, I cannot but hope to be restored to her Majesty's service and his Majesty's favour, whose just and gracious disposition, I verily think, would have been moved to compassion ere this by the consideration both of the cause in itself honest and lamentable and of the honour I have to be so near his Majesty and in his blood, but that it is God's will her Majesty should have a hand in so honourable and charitable a work as to re-obtain his Majesty's favour to one that esteemeth it her greatest worldly comfort. So wishing you all honour and happiness, I take leave and remain

"Your very loving cousin

"A. S."[2]

"May it please your most excellent Majesty

"I presume to send herewith a copy of my humble petition to the King's Majesty whereby your Majesty may perceive with less trouble than any other relations of mine as much (in effect) as I can say of the

[1] She married later the second Earl of Roxburgh and died on the 7th October, 1643. Hone's *Every-day Book*.

[2] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 61.

condition of my present estate and hard fortune. Now to whom may I so fitly address myself with confidence of help and mediation, as to your Royal person (the mirror of our sex) and being for me your Majesty's humble and devoted servant, and in a cause of this nature, so full of piety and commiseration, I will wholly rely upon your Princely goodness, whom I humbly beseech to vouchsafe to enter into a gracious consideration of the true estate of my case and fortune, and then I nothing doubt, but that in the true nobleness of your royal mind your Majesty will be pleased to mediate for me, in such sort, as in your most princely wisdom and favour the same shall be moved. And I shall always pray for the everlasting honour and felicity of your Majesty with all your royal issue in all things and will remain for ever

"Your Majesty's
most humble and dutiful subject
and servant
"ARBELLA SEYMAURE.[1]

"To the Queen's most excellent
Majesty."

The following petition may possibly be the one enclosed in the Queen's letter, at all events it would be one very similar in tone, as all Arabella's petitions were necessarily very much the same.

"May it please your most excellent Majesty,

"To regard with the eyes of your royal and gracious heart the unfortunate estate of me, your Majesty's handmaid, who, knowing your Majesty's gracious favour to her to be the greatest honour, comfort, and felicity that this world can afford, doth now feel any part of the contrary to be the most grievous affliction to her that can be imagined.

"Whereinsoever your Majesty will say I have

[1] State Papers. Record Office.

offended I will not contest, but in all humility prostrate myself at your Majesty's feet, only I do most humbly on my knees beseech your Majesty to believe that that thought never yet entered into my heart to do anything that might justly deserve any part of your indignation.

"But if the necessity of my state and fortune, together with my weakness, have caused me to do somewhat not pleasing to your Majesty, most gracious Sovereign let it be all covered with the shadow of your royal benignity and pardoned in that heroical mind of yours, which is never closed to those who carry a most sincere and dutiful affection to your person, and that prayeth for the most happy prosperity of your Majesty, our most gracious Queen, and your royal issue in all things for ever, amongst which number Almighty God, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, knoweth me to be one who am also

"Your Majesty's most humble, faithful
subject and servant."[1]

Arabella's petitions may seem to us now servile and extravagant in style, but in her own day they were considered models of polished elegance.

"Lady Arabella has on the King's return from the Progress induced the Lords of the Council to present to his Majesty a petition drawn up and written out by herself begging for greater freedom. She met with some opposition but they agreed to oblige her. The king first of all made an observation on the subscription in which she no longer calls herself a Stewart but Seymour, the family of her husband, and he showed annoyance. After reading the petition he desired the Earl of Salisbury to look through it; Salisbury subsequently declared that he did not blush to own that his style, for all that he was first Secretary, could not rival that of a woman, for he thought it would tax all

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 85.

Parliament to draft an answer which should correspond to the arguments and eloquence of the petition. The King asked whether it was well that a woman so closely allied to the royal blood should rule her life after her own caprice, and announced that he reserved his answer."[1]

The King "reserved his answer." Did Arabella's words move him even to hesitation, or was it just one of, his wise devices under cover of which he could hold to his own course, while escaping the censure of men by his show of weighing grave considerations? Few courtiers dared speak their mind, fewer still put their thoughts on paper. Only indirectly is it possible to tell how much or how little the monarch deceived his contemporaries.

The forwarder of Arabella's petition was one of these, and her opinion as to the treatment her cousin would ultimately receive was not rose-tinted. To prepare Arabella as gently as possible for the course Lady Jane felt certain the King would pursue was probably the main motive of this letter:—

"Madame,

"I received your ladyship's letter and, with it, another paper which has just the same words that was in the letter, but your ladyship did not command me to do anything with it, so that I cannot imagine to what use you sent it, always I shall keep it till I know your ladyship's pleasure. Yesterday being Sunday, I could have but little time to speak with her Majesty, but this day her Majesty hath seen your Ladyship's letter and her Majesty says that when she gave your ladyship's petition and letter to his Majesty, he did take it well enough but gave no answer but that 'ye had eaten of the forbidden tree.' This was all her

[1] Venetian State Papers.

Majesty commanded me to say to this purpose but withal did remember her kindly to your ladyship, and sent you this little token in notice of the continuation of her Majesty's favour to your ladyship. Now, where your ladyship desires me to deal openly and freely with you, I protest I can say nothing on knowledge, for I never spake to any of that purpose but to the Queen; but the wisdom of this state, with the example how some of your quality in the like cause has been used makes me fear that ye shall not find so easy end to your troubles as ye expect or I wish. This is all I can say, and I should think myself happy if my notions could give better testimony of my truly being

"Your ladyship's

"Affectionate friend to do you service

"JANE DRUMMOND."[1]

Strangely, Lady Jane alone appears to have realized the irrevocable nature of Arabella's offence in the King's eyes.

Lord Shrewsbury, whilst Arabella was still at Lambeth, mentions in a letter to Dr. Moundford that his niece's friends and "the wisest men" about the Court did not expect the King's displeasure with her to continue long.[2] Later still, Sergeant Minor told his kinsman, Sir James Crofts, that the Council protested the King's anger with Arabella would in a very short time be at an end.[3]

Either Lady Jane was more clear-sighted or more pessimistic, but the end justified her opinion.

The Earl of Shrewsbury's position was very difficult at this time. He laments that he could do no more for Arabella than pray the King for her release, while as a member of the Council he was obliged to sign the decrees that distressed and harassed her.

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 64 and 65. Cooper.

[2] *Ibid.*, f. 116. [3] *Ibid.*, f. 118.

Cecil was, of course, in the same position, but no evidence remains to show that he gave his voice in favour of Arabella. He had often helped her before, and was a close friend of the Shrewsburys; it is natural to suppose that they would appeal to him, but from now onwards to the end of Arabella's life, he appears never to have regarded her sufferings.

But from less powerful sources she was to experience the deepest sympathy, as a letter from Lady Chandos to her friend Dr. Moundford shows:—

"Doctor Moundford,

"I desire the widow's prayers, with my humble service may by you be presented to the Lady Arabella who I hope God will so fortify her mind as she will take this cross with such patience as may be to His pleasing, who, as this day signifies, took upon him a great deal more for us, and when he seeth time, he will send comfort to the afflicted. I pray you if you want for the honourable lady what is in this house, you will send for it; for most willingly the master and mistress of this house would have her ladyship command it. If the drink do like my lady spare not to send. The Knight and my daughter[1] remember their kind commendations unto yourself. So I commit you to God and rest

"Your friend,

"FRANCES CHANDOS."[2]

[1] This daughter was Lady Kennedy, a woman of great beauty. Having felt the weight of royal displeasure herself, she would be able the more easily to sympathize with Arabella. In her youth she had been maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth, and by her beauty unfortunately attracted the Earl of Essex; and the story was common at the time that the unfortunate girl *felt* the Queen's anger. This unhappy beauty had a dowry of £16,000, and married eventually a Scotchman, who at the same time had a wife living in Scotland. Lady Kennedy became involved in lawsuits which exhausted her fortune, and she died in poverty in 1617.

[2] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 109.

Arabella in her misery must have felt the kindliness that prompted such a letter very sweet.

One secret solace Arabella possessed at Lambeth, owing to the kindly blindness of Sir Thomas Parry, and the devotion of one of her servants, a man named Smith.

This was nothing less than a continual interchange of letters with her husband, who, together with certain of his servants, was still safe within the Tower. It may be remarked here that the dread authorities of older times appeared to be curiously shortsighted, in that a prisoner was not only allowed to retain his servants, but that those servants were allowed free egress from the prison. Small wonder that prison-breaking was more frequent then than now!

But to return to Arabella's correspondence with her husband; one letter out of the many that passed between them remains.

"I am exceeding sorry to hear you have not been well. I pray you let me know truly how you do and what was the cause of it. I am not satisfied with the reason Smith gives for it; but if it be a cold I will impute it to some sympathy betwixt us, having myself gotten a swollen cheek at the same time with a cold. For God's sake let not your grief of mind work upon your body. You may see by me what inconvenience it will bring one to; and no fortune I assure you daunts me so much as that weakness of body I find in myself; for '*si nous vivons l'age d'un veau*,' as Marot says, we may, by God's grace be happier than we look for, in being suffered to enjoy oneself with his Majesty's favour. But if we be not able to live to it, I for my part shall think myself a pattern of misfortune, in enjoying so great a blessing as you so little while. No separation but that deprives me of the comfort of you.

For wheresoever you be or in what state soever you are, it sufficeth me you are mine! Rachel wept and would not be comforted because her children were no more. And that indeed is the remediless sorrow, and none else! And therefore God bless us from that and I will hope well of the rest, though I see no apparent hope. But I am sure God's book mentioneth many of His children in as great distress, that have done well after even in this world! I do assure you nothing the state can do with me can trouble me so much as the news of your being ill doth; and you see when I am troubled I trouble you with tedious kindness; for so I think you will account so long a letter, yourself not having written to me this long while how you do. But sweet sir, I speak not this to trouble you with writing but when you please. Be well, and I shall account myself happy in being

"Your faithful loving wife

"ARBELLA STUART." [1]

About the beginning of 1611 this correspondence was discovered, and again the King was divided between wrath and anxiety.

More determined than ever to sever all connection between Arabella and her husband, he decided to remove the former to some place sufficiently far distant to prevent any renewal of their intercourse.

But, with a touch of his usual hypocrisy, the King professed to desire a more godly guardian for Arabella, one who should show her by example and precept the sinfulness of disobedience to the King's commands.

His choice fell on the Bishop of Durham as a suitable gaoler, and on the 13th of March, 1611, he wrote his instructions in the following shining example of the justificatory style:—

[1] Harley MSS. Costello.

"James R.

"Right Reverend Father in God and Trusty and Well-beloved, we greet you well. Whereas our cousin the Lady Arabella hath highly offended us in seeking to marry herself without our knowledge (to whom she had the honour to be near in blood), and in proceeding afterwards to a full conclusion of a marriage with the self-same person whom (for many just causes) we had expressly forbidden her to marry; after he had in our presence, and before our Council, forsworn all interest concerning her, either past or present, with solemn protestations upon his allegiance, in her hearing, never to renew any such motion again. Forasmuch as it is more necessary for us to make some such demonstration now of the just sense and feeling we have, after so great an indignity offered unto us, as may make others know by her example that no respect of personal affection can make us neglect those considerations wherein both the honour and order of the State is interested. We have therefore thought good out of trust in your fidelity and discretion, to remit to your care and custody the person of our said Cousin, requiring and authorizing you hereby to carry her down in your company to any house of yours as unto you shall seem best and most convenient, there to remain in such sort as shall be set down to you by directions from the Council, or any six of them, to whom we have both declared our pleasure both for the manner of her restraint, and have also given in charge upon conference with you, to take order for all things necessary either for her health or otherwise. This being as you see, the difference between us and her, that whereas she hath abounded towards us in disobedience and ingratitude, we are (on the contrary) still apt to temper the severity of our justice with grace and favour towards her, as may well appear by the course we have taken to commit her only to your custody, in whose house she may be so well assured to receive all good usage, and see more fruit

and exercise of religion and virtue than in many other places. For all which this shall be your sufficient warrant.

"From Royston, this 13th of March. 1611."[1]

How Arabella received the news of her banishment to Durham may be imagined. She had already complained at Lambeth that the loss of her liberty had affected her health, never very good, and this last trouble added so greatly to her anxiety that she became seriously ill. She appears to have feared that the removal to Durham was but a prelude to something worse, and that she would never again return to London. It is difficult now to understand her dread; there does not seem much to choose between imprisonment at Lambeth and imprisonment at Durham, since the fact of the prisoners' ability to correspond had been discovered and rendered impossible.

But according to the lugubrious tone of the Venetian Ambassador's letter, Arabella's dread of Durham may not then have been considered so unreasonable.

"Just when it was hoped that the Lady Arabella was about to enjoy the royal clemency, she, in spite of many arguments advanced in defence of her marriage, and many humble excuses made to the King was unanimously, by the whole Council ordered to set out within twenty days for Durham, thirty miles from the Scottish Border, where she was to live in the keeping of the Bishop. It is thought that the king will send her even further, and by putting her out of the kingdom he will secure himself against disaffection settling round her. Her husband is confined to the Tower for life and more closely guarded than heretofore; this has

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 96.

thrown him into extreme affliction nor are there wanting those who bewail his unhappiness."[1]

The Ambassador's idea was of course absurd. James could have no hold on Arabella *outside* his own kingdom, and, as after events proved, he had a lively dread of the consequences that might ensue, should she ever depart from it. Unless by "kingdom" the Ambassador meant England, and was pointing out the possibility of Arabella being sent on to Scotland, an idea which seems to have presented itself to her as well.

Early in the morning of March 15th, 1611, Arabella, in spite of her ill-health and frenzied protests, was delivered by Sir Thomas Parry to the Bishop of Durham. Owing to the short notice given to the latter he had been unable to prepare for his guest's journey which was in consequence to be by short and easy stages.

The Council[2] had demanded a night's lodging for Arabella in the house of Sir William Bond at Highgate, which was to be the first halt on the Lambeth to Durham journey. Short as was the distance between Lambeth and Highgate, Arabella, when she was lifted from her litter at Sir William's door, was found to have become so ill as to require the attendance of her doctor.

The Bishop trusted to a night's rest being productive of the sufficient strength and resignation Arabella required to continue her journey. Great was his dismay when he learned on the following morning that his charge still declared herself unfit to travel; and in that statement Moundford agreed with her. Thus the Bishop was obliged to allow her to remain for a few days, but on the 21st of March it was determined that she should be removed to Barnet, the next step on her

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers. January 21st, 1611.
[2] See Harley MSS., 7003, f. 102.

journey and distant about six miles. Arabella still, however, protested that she was too ill to move, and the Bishop of Durham proceeded to employ force, apparently in accordance with his orders, as he speaks deprecatingly of using "the means prescribed" which were employed with all "decency and respect."[1]

In spite, however, of the "decency and respect" with which the Bishop of Durham had ordered Arabella to be carried off to Barnet on her mattress, she was again exceedingly ill upon the journey. Arabella seems indeed throughout to have been entirely insensible of the Bishop's tact, while his hearty thanks to the Council for sending Sir James Croft to relieve him were probably thoroughly genuine.

Indeed, the whole affair seems to have worried the Bishop exceedingly. The King, on the other hand, took the "decent treatment" of his cousin very easily, sapiently remarking that "her impatient spirit was the sole cause of her indisposition."[2] In a rather contradictory spirit James refused to believe the reports from Barnet, and insisted that Arabella's illness was feigned.

To support his theory he sent down the Prince's physician, Dr. John Hammond, who, however, after spending three days in attendance upon Arabella, was compelled to agree with Dr. Moundford as to the serious condition of the patient. By this time Sir James Croft and his kinsman, Sergeant Minors, were in charge of Arabella.

Sir James proceeded to reason with his prisoner, whose fear of the unknown was largely contributing to increase her ill-health, and strove if possible to mitigate her overwhelming anxiety. Very sensibly

[1] Calendar of State Papers. March 21st, 1611.

[2] See Harley MSS., 7003, f. 114.

he urged that a show of submission to the royal will was the most likely thing to soften the King's heart. In this way he succeeded in obtaining Arabella's consent to a removal to East Barnet.

On the 31st of March Arabella was in readiness to accompany Sir James thither when another obstacle arose, and this time not of Arabella's making.

"Right Honourable,

"May it please the same to be advertised that yesterday about three of the clock in the afternoon, the Lady Arabella apparelled herself with what convenience she might by reason of her weakness, showing a ready willingness to remove, which myself with others finding, I gallopped over to Mr. Conyers' house to see all things accommodated there to the best that might be, but found nothing there to be prepared for her La. coming nor hope for anything to come in since for that day's remove: so I hastened back again and with the advice of the Reverend Father in God the Bishop of Duresme (Durham) and Doctor Momford (Dr. Moundford) we moved her La. to betake herself to her best ease and to prepare herself against Monday morning which her La. condescended unto but my good Lords in that short time in which her La. sat up, which was little more than half an hour, she grew very faint and was thereby enforced to go to bed where her La. remaining and we at supper, about eight of the clock, her La. sent hastily for the Doctor who averreth that her La. was afflicted at that time with a melancholy passion proceeding from her heart and forming up to the brains which caused a dizziness in her head with extreme pain, but that fit did not long endure. This morning early I rode to Mr. Conyers where I found nothing to furnish the house but kitchen and buttery provisions which Mr. Peel brought on with him hither yesterday by four of the clock, bedding and linen none at all without

which there can be no remove; we lose much good time and no means in us to remedy the same. And thus I most humbly take my leave from East Barnet the last of March 1611.

"Most humbly to be commanded
by yr. good Lls.
"JAMES CROFT.

"To the Right Honourable the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council these."[1]

However, on the 2nd of April Sir James was able to notify the Lords that "about eleven of the clock yesterday the Lady Arabella was removed from Barnet to East Barnet, Mr. Conyers' house, to which place the Reverend Father Bishop of Durham attended her ladyship, and after prayers read to her Ladyship, his lordship took his leave and is gone onwards."

The latter continues with a graphic account of Arabella's "powerfull" sickness by the way, and concludes "this morning her ladyship complaineth of weariness by reason of yesterday's remove (her journey had been but a mile and a half long) and to have rested ill this night past."

Finding the Queen's mediation not as efficacious as she had hoped, and knowing that she was far too ill to travel, Arabella determined to beg the Council to intercede with the King and to obtain some time for her to rest in quiet at East Barnet. To this end she wrote:—

"May it please your Lordships

"I protest I am in so weak case as I hereby think it would be the cause of my death to be removed any whither at this time though it were to a place to my liking. My late discomfortable journey which I have not yet recovered had almost ended my days, and I

[1] State Papers. Record Office.

have never since gone out of a few little and hot rooms and am in many ways unfit to take the air. I trust your Lordships will not look I should be so un-christian as to be the cause of my own death, and leave it to your Lordships' wisdom to consider what the world should conceive if I should be violently forced to do it.

"Therefore I beseech your Lordships to be humble suitors in my behalf, that I may have some time given me to recover my strength which I should the sooner do if I were not continually molested. And I will hope and pray that God will incline his Majesty's heart every way to more compassion to me who rest

"Very humbly at your Lordships' command

"A. S."[1]

Arabella's story was so haloed by romance that many, even those who very probably had never seen her, adopted her as the heroine of the hour. The wave of public opinion was thus tinged with sympathy, and James, noting this, feared lest his treatment of Arabella should be considered too harsh. So he was all the more willing to listen to the Council's representations and in return for them to grant his cousin permission to stay at East Barnet for three weeks before continuing her journey.

Possibly Arabella hoped that after this sign of grace James might relent so far as to permit her to remain in the South of England. Probably it was with this thought that she wrote to Lady Jane to obtain any scraps of gossip which might serve as tokens of the King's humour towards her.

"Good cousin,

"I think myself as much beholden to you as if my man had brought me assurance of his Majesty's

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 58, and Cooper.

favour by her Majesty's means, because I find your kindness in remembering me and preventing suspicions. But I cannot rest satisfied till I may know what disaster of mine hindereth his Majesty's goodness towards me, having such a mediatrix to plead so just and honest a cause as mine. Therefore I pray you with all earnestness let me know freely what hath been done concerning me. So, wishing you all honour and happiness I take my leave.

"Yours."[1]

Strange that Arabella, whose knowledge of her royal cousin's character must have been great, should have hoped for forgiveness. But that she still believed in the prospect of obtaining it may be seen in her letter to the King, written most probably towards the close of her three weeks' respite.

"May it please your most excellent Majesty,

"Graciously to accept my most humble thanks for these halcyon days it has pleased your Majesty to grant me. And since it hath pleased your Majesty to give me this testimony of willingness to have me live awhile; in all humility I beg the restitution of those comforts without which every hour of my life is discomfortable to me, the principal whereof is your Majesty's favour, which none that breathes can more highly esteem than I, who, whilst I live, will not cease to pray to the Almighty for your Majesty's prosperity and rest.

"Your Majesty's most humble and faithful almost ruined subject and servant

"ARBELLA S."[2]

In the meantime the Bishop of Durham on his way northward had visited the King at Royston, and on

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 70.
[2] Add. MSS., 4161, ff. 36, 37.

April 17th he wrote from Trinity College, Cambridge, to Sir James Croft. After complaining of the "tertian ague" which sharply attacked him, he goes on with matter more relative to Arabella :—

"I was no sooner come into the Court, but I was presently brought to his Majesty, who asked me of the Lady Arbella and where I left her. I told his Majesty of her estate in these three removes; of the grief which she conceived of her Majesty's indignation; of her hearty and zealous prayers for him and his; of her willingness if it might so please him, even to sweep his chamber. Whereunto it pleased his Majesty to call the Prince, who was there in the same room. I do not see but that his Majesty is well pleased with the time that she hath to recover strength, and that he hath an especial care that she should be used and respected as a noble lady of her birth and nearness to him, and time may work that which in this shortness cannot be effected. I pray you present my duty and service unto her, to pray her to remember what oftentimes I out of a true heart (as yourselves in my hearing have done) have said unto her. So shall she best please God by her obedience, satisfy his Majesty, comfort her own conscience, enable her good friends to speak for her, and stop the mouths (if any there be) who envy her restitution unto his Majesty's favour. My poor opinion is that, if she wrong not herself, God in time will move his Majesty's heart to have compassion upon her."[1]

Certainly the Bishop's communication was so far of a consolatory nature, but its soothing effect was marred by the conclusion of his letter, in which he mentions his active preparations for Arabella's reception in the North. The Bishop, indeed, was hardly a success in his capacity of gaoler, though he seems earnestly to

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 120.

have sought to be so. His efforts and anxieties proved to have an evil effect upon his constitution, as some little time after taking leave of Arabella he was obliged to visit Bath, having been much injured by his attendance on her! She, meanwhile, was busy devising fresh means to enable her to gain her liberty. Finding the King inaccessible to reason, she drew up a petition to the Lord Chief Justice of England and the Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas.

"To the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice of England and the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.

"My Lords—

"Whereas I have been long restrained from my liberty, which is as much to be regarded as my life, and am appointed as I understand, to be removed far from these Courts of Justice where I ought to be examined, tried, and then condemned or cleared, to remote parts, whose courts I hold unfitted for the trial of my offence; this is to beseech your Lordships to enquire by an Habeas Corpus or other usual form of law what is my fault; and if, upon examination by your lordships I shall thereof be justly convicted, let me endure such punishment by your Lordships' sentence as is due to such an offender. And if your Lordships may not or will not of yourselves grant unto me the ordinary relief of a distressed subject then I beseech you become humble intercessors to his Majesty that I may receive such benefit of justice as both his Majesty by his oath, those of his blood not excepted, hath promised, and the laws of this realm afford to all others.

"And though (unfortunate woman that I am,) I should obtain neither, yet I beseech your Lordships retain me in your good opinion, and judge charitably till I be proved to have committed any offence against

God or his Majesty, deserving so long restraint and separation from my lawful husband. So, praying for your Lordships, I rest.

"Your afflicted poor suppliant

"A. S."[1]

Naturally, Arabella's request was disregarded, the wishes of King James being dearer to "my lords'" hearts than an impartial administration of English law.

But the end of the three weeks still found Arabella, though slightly better, unfit to travel. On April 17th Sir James wrote to the Council once more, representing her condition and asking for further instructions.

"Right Honourable,

"May it please your good lordships to be advertised that the time, as I conceive, approacheth near which was appointed by his most gracious Majesty that the Lady Arabella should begin her journey towards Durham, namely the 24th. of this present April, although her La. hath remained here yet but 18 days by reason of the time that was spent in finding out a house for her La. to stay in, and a full month was then given her from our Lady Day forward to recover her health, whereof I thought good to give intimation to your Lordships by that day whether I shall expect any further instructions from his Majesty or your Lordships than formerly I have had for conducting her La. as aforesaid, as also to know what direction will be given for the number of such persons as of necessity must daily travel and attend in this journey, together with the means of defraying the charges, and the persons which shall be appointed for that office. And for this letter I have requested the bearer hereof Mr. Nicholas Pay, a very discreet and sufficient gentleman to be employed,

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 152

to wait your Lordships' pleasures herein. Furthermore I conceive it a part of my duty, wherein if I err, I most humbly crave pardon of your lordships to acquaint your Lordships here by my observations I find the state of this Lady both in body and mind, which is in manner following; It appeareth by such rest as time hath given her La. here, joined with some kind of physic which hath been ministered unto her that she is somewhat better and lightsomer than heretofore, but that not otherwise than that she hath not walked as yet the length of her bedchamber to my knowledge. . . . She apprehendeth nothing but fear and danger in the most ugliest forms conceiving always the worst and much worse than any way can happen to her, of danger; As for her going this journey, or that his Majesty, should dispose of her at his pleasure she doth not gainsay but the horrors of her utter ruin and end which hourly present themselves to her phantasy occasioned (as she discovereth herself unto me) by the remoteness of the place whereunto she must go, driveth her to utter despair to return or to be able to live out only one year: when and otherwise, if she were left, as her La. saith, in some convenient place not so clean out of the world as she termeth Durham to be, she would gather to herself some weak hopes of more gentle fortune in time to come. These and the like are the best and pleasingest discourses that any time I can have with her La. whereunto whatsoever I can reply to the contrary giveth her no manner of satisfaction at all. And thus in all humbleness I take my leave, praying your Lordships' happiness with increase of all honour, from East Barnet the 17th. of April, 1611.

"Your Lordships' most bounden and ever to be commanded

"JAMES CROFT.

"To the Right Honourable the Lords of his Majesty's privy council these be delivered."[1]

[1] State Papers. Record Office.

Probably owing to Sir James' representations his prisoner was allowed to overstay her time. Early in May the Venetian Ambassador wrote that "Lady Arabella ought to have left for Durham by this time as the last concession of a month's delay, made to her at the instance of the Chancellor of Scots has now expired. All the same she is said to be in a state of very poor health and with a mind most impatient of this trouble and it would not be surprising if her departure were put off for a few days more."

Meanwhile Sergeant Minors had written to his kinsman that it was the King's absolute resolution that Arabella should go to Durham, and begged Sir James to urge her to face the journey. She was to start on the following Monday, even though her rate of travel was of the slowest.

James was by this time making vague speeches as to the good in store for Arabella if she would but show her obedience to him by undertaking the journey. But Arabella had by that time lost—if, indeed, she ever possessed any—her faith in James. Her determination not to go to Durham was now unalterable. Yet unless she could escape from her cousin's power, she would, she knew, be compelled to submit to exile. Behind her feverish anxiety, behind her endless piteous appeals, lay a half-formed plan to which in her pessimistic moments she turned with relief. Her reckless spirit, her mind ill-attuned to reasonable calculations were all in favour of her wild project. But to carry it into execution, strength, time, friends, and money were needed. Friends, devoted servants, who under the spell of her undoubted personal charm would have died for her, she possessed, and the other three requisites she set about to gain.

It is more than probable that in her rage against her imprisonment she had hinted at the rash possibilities to which she might be driven by desperation. "My poor opinion is *that if she wrong not herself*, God in time will move his Majesty's heart to have compassion upon her."[1] Had the Bishop of Durham before he wrote that been given a glimpse of the mettle Arabella was made of?

She remained apparently as weak and ailing as ever, and spared no lamentations over her hard fate. The result proved the Venetian's surmise to be correct.

Her misery had the desired effect upon those two kindly spirits, Dr. Moundford and Sir James Croft, and they determined to make a personal appeal to the Council. Since their journey took them some time, this gained for Arabella another two weeks. As Sir James was to see the King, it seemed advisable for Arabella to draw up another of her pathetic petitions, which her guardian would present.

The draft of this remains, crossed and re-crossed, its many alterations significant of the patient care expended on it. The result of her trouble, though it failed to achieve its purpose, was so good that King, Prince, and Council commended it highly, and the King professed to find much *pleasure* in reading it.

"May it please your excellent Majesty,

"Though it hath pleased God to lay so many crosses upon me as I account myself the most miserable creature living, yet none is so grievous to me as the loss of your Majesty's favour, which appeareth, not so much to my unspeakable grief in any other effect of it (though the least of many it hath already brought forth is sufficient for my utter ruin) as in that

[1] See *ante*.

your Majesty giveth credence (as I hear) to those sinister reports which impute to my obstinacy that which proceedeth merely out of my necessity; not willing that I might be thought guilty of hastening my own death by any voluntary action of mine, having first endeavoured, by all good means, to make my extreme weakness known to your Majesty (by my Lord Ferton and by the Lords of your Majesty's most honourable Privy Council by writing, and many other ways before my remove. But my misfortune being such as not only any protestation of mine own, but the reiterated testimony of such grave persons as advertised the like, seemed of less weight than the traducements of some whisperers.) But nothing availing me, certainly I had perished if your Majesty had not speedily had compassion on me in granting me this time of stay for recovery; to which if it may please your Majesty of your gracious goodness to add three weeks more Dr. Moundford hopes I may recover so much strength as may enable me to travel. And I shall ever be willing whilst I breathe, to yield you my most humble and dutiful obedience as to my sovereign for whose felicity for ever in all things I cease not to pray and in all fortunes rest

"Your Majesty's most humble and faithful
"Subject and Servant,
"A. S."

This letter, backed by Sir James' and Dr. Moundford's special pleading, obtained the wished-for delay. Ill Arabella had undoubtedly been, and she was probably at this time only convalescent. But she can scarcely have been as weak as she had represented to her guardians, or she would never have lived through the fatigues she undertook but a little later. She must have been a fairly clever actress, as she managed to deceive not only Sir James but Dr. Moundford as to her actual condition.

But at all events one more month of rest had been granted to her, and at the expiration of that time, whether she was ill or no, she must set forth for Durham. Realizing this, she determined to make the most of her time, and began active preparations towards the fulfilment of her last resource—escape.

CHAPTER X

IF anxiety and confinement had broken Arabella's health, they had served William Seymour no better.

The severity of his imprisonment varied considerably, according to the fluctuations of the King's fears. At first he was a close prisoner, but after some time he petitioned for, and obtained, the liberty of the Tower.

"May it please your Lordships,

"Since his Majesty is so highly offended with me that, I have not as yet (fearing further to incur his Majesty's disfavour) offered any manner of petition to his princely hands, before the way be made more easy, I only address myself to your honourable lordships being now bereft of my nearest friends through his Majesty's indignation, humbly beseeching you to be intercessors to his Majesty; that it would please him (of his gracious and accustomed bounty) to restore me to his most wished-for favour and my former liberty, or if that may seem too large a suit, that it would please his Majesty in the meantime to grant me the liberty of this place for the recovery of my health, which is much decayed and will not easily be repaired, whereof the Lieutenant can well certify your Lordships.

"I must confess I have offended his Majesty which is my greatest sorrow, yet I hope not in that measure that I should desire my utter ruin and destruction, since I protest my offence was committed before I knew

it to be an offence.[1] Wherefore I humbly beseech your Lordships since the bottom of this wound is searched to be a means that it may be healed.

"Thus relying on your lordships honourable dispositions I humbly take my leave resting always

"To be commanded by your lordships

"W. S."[2]

Considering the undue importance James attached to Seymour's marriage, that gentleman appears to have occupied a surprisingly small place in the gossip of the time. One or two mentions—and these of the slightest—of him remain in letters; attention was centred on the more pathetic of the bridal pair, and until Seymour escaped he seemed to have faded from the public's thoughts.

Somehow at the time of his marriage he presents but a poor figure and one very difficult to be in sympathy with; he shows as a feeble shadow, wavering and inconsistent. Later, when his character was completely developed, he becomes extraordinarily different. Then he was, according to his biographers, possessed of a rather unusual number of virtues, yet in 1610 men wrote of him indifferently, even slightingly, with no word of pity such as they used for Arabella.

His apologists say that the chilly excuses advanced by him for his marriage need not be regarded as a genuine expression of his sentiments. He would naturally, they contend, do the best he could for himself under the circumstances; no one falling under the royal displeasure troubled greatly to tell the truth, but rather chose the more effective way out of the difficulty.

[1] Why Seymour should persist in this assertion it is impossible to say. This letter is undated, but he was in the Tower only *after* his marriage, and therefore after the King's prohibition.

[2] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 113.

Mr. Bradley points out that he would willingly have withdrawn his pledge, when he found into what danger it would lead him, but that he was reluctantly forced to fulfil it by Arabella, who thereby placed herself in a very ugly position. That is perfectly true, yet Seymour's reluctance—judging from his excuses—must have been perfectly well known to his contemporaries, and therefore one would expect to find that considerable ridicule had been meted out to Arabella.

On the contrary, she obtained nothing but sympathy from several of her royal relatives, from the Court, from the people. It was not because she was a woman, and one reputed charming, nor was it because she was of the blood royal, that ridicule passed her by, as some time previously, in a different connection, she had been the subject of a caricature presented in a theatre. So one is forced to conclude that sympathy was a general and genuine sentiment towards her in 1610–11, and one in which Seymour had no part.

Arabella and William sinned in precisely the same way, but the need for a sufficient excuse was not equally great for both of them. Of the two Arabella was in the more awkward plight, as owing to her relationship to the throne she was the most likely to incur the larger share of the King's displeasure.

Yet Arabella before James and his Council, though she made several excuses, never attempted to hide her love for William. Rather, in her eyes, did it rank as the grand motive of her action. That James had never "regarded her," that her position was peculiar and unpleasant she admitted, but never for an instant did she swerve from the chiefest of her reasons—love. Whether her affection would have become as deep for the Mol-

davian pretender had she married him is beside the question.

The grave Lords of the Council stooped to prove the fickleness of Seymour. Arabella denied it hotly, then, abandoning the position, excused him on the ground of expedience, and backed his excuse with a quotation from the Scriptures. Had a base motive been necessary to avert the King's wrath from Seymour, it is quite certain that Arabella would have held her peace. Instead, her words again showed forth as fire against his ice.

"A few days ago Lady Arabella concluded her marriage . . . both were summoned before the Council. The young man who was brought in first denied the fact. She however freely confessed it and excused the denial of her husband on the score of fear."

Yet some years later the man for whom such an excuse was made voluntarily offered his life a ransom for another's.[1] So that Arabella, if she believed what she said, knew and understood the character of her husband as little then as we do to-day.

But at least she knew what his circumstances were. His allowance as a younger grandchild was small, the old Earl made no attempt to help him, and for many of the luxuries by which Seymour was surrounded in prison, he had to thank Arabella.

Imprisonment in the Tower during the seventeenth century was, if the prisoner was wealthy and important, a comparatively easy punishment. Certainly all who sojourned there complained that lack of liberty and of exercise affected their health, and it is customary to

[1] Seymour was one of the four peers who offered their lives to Parliament in place of that of King Charles I.—*Peerage.* Ed. G. E. C.

regard prison and—well, unpleasantness—as synonymous terms. But the actual life of a State prisoner differed greatly from the traditional one. Raleigh, who preceded Seymour and Arabella to the Tower, and was there throughout their imprisonment, had a suite of five rooms, with a terrace to walk on. His wife, children, and certain servants resided with him—his wife, by the way, was forbidden to drive her coach into the precincts of the Tower—and though he complained of ruin, of the impossibility of making any provision for his family, yet he possessed sufficient money to purchase jewels, thus gratifying his taste as a connoisseur of gems.

A very interesting letter from the Lieutenant of the Tower to Lord Salisbury is preserved among the State Papers, and though it is dated nearly a year later, I have inserted it here, as it gives an excellent picture of Seymour's life as a prisoner. Certain of the Lieutenant's statements must be accepted with reserve, as his object in writing the letter was to justify his retention of William's valuables, but that a claim for the goods enumerated had been made by Seymour shows that he was undoubtedly surrounded by them during his residence in the Tower.

"It may please your honourable lordship,

"I shall ever hold myself in duty and all just respect to satisfy your Lordship in any matter whatsoever that shall be exhibited against me. And therefore by this my plain and true declaration your good lordship shall perceive, that not only my poor self, but that honourable personage in whose name the memorial of Mr. Seymour's stuff left behind in the Tower was presented by Mrs. Smythe (as he himself doth acknowledge before me) to the Lady Arabella was abused.

Nevertheless, I humbly crave pardon (otherwise than to satisfy your lordship) that I may respite my answer to any other, until Mr. Seymour, who strayed from hence shall himself come to demand anything of me, towards whom by usage I deserved better requital than I find. But to satisfy your lordship I may truly affirm, never any serving in this place hath had so troublesome and burdensome a charge as I have had in those few years I have served here, both for number of dangerous prisoners and others of great quality. And I hope his excellent Majesty and your lordship will not judge me unworthy of those benefits my predecessors have always enjoyed. For if Mr. Seymour had been by order discharged out of this place, or died here, he must have left all his stuff, plate, books and other things whatsoever, behind him. And I hope it is not meant this escape (of which here I will say no more) shall be construed to his benefit and to my disadvantage. But to show your honourable lordship how his lordship is abused therein,—First it may please your lordship to be informed that Mr. Seymour had not anything from his honourable grandfather, but either from the Lady Arbella or bought by me or yet unpaid for.

"For example, in the memorial, there is set down a suit of arras. It is true there was a suit of tapestry bought and paid for by myself, upon the agreement between Mr. Seymour and me when he was removed out of my own lodging and chamber, which I forebore a quarter of a year to pleasure him, that he should give me in money so much as dornys would cost to hang that chamber, which cost me £48. and were with evil usage quite spoiled.

"Where there are two other hangings set down, the one of saye,[1] the other of dornys,[2] the truth is, Mr. Seymour had the same of the upholster that doth

[1] Serge, or other delicate woollen hangings.

[2] This I do not understand, unless it is a corruption of "dornick" or "dornek," a coarse sort of damask much used for carpets and hangings, etc.

serve the Tower, but never paid for the same, and though they pertained to me, yet I gave the upholsterer leave to dispose of the same. That of saye was so spoiled as my Lord Grey would not give above £10. for them, and the upholsterer hath them again. The other of dornys are fitted only for the chamber where they are, and will serve to no other use, for which my Lord Grey hath satisfied the upholsterer as they agreed.

"It is true there was some bedding fetched from my Lady Arbella's house, other taken of the upholsterer, for which he is repaid. So the stuff of the kitchen was fetched from her house, what it may appear, for my own part, I never saw any of it.

"There is mention of a cup worth £40. which I am bold to send to your honourable lordship to see. It was given by my Lady Mary Peiton, Mr. Seymour's aunt, to my Lady Arbella, and she sent it to Mr. Seymour.

"There was a gown of cuft taffeta which was found on his bed, and other suits, which I made the reckoning of as they are put into chairs and stools; the rest my servants and his had amongst them. There were six old silver dishes, four small candlesticks, and 7 trenchers, which were also the Lady Arbella's, who hath use both of those dishes and of others of mine and my stuff which all came but to £40.

"There was a fair basin and ewer, silver, and gilt which Mr. Seymour sold before his escape, which should not have been carried out of the house if I had known of it. And other of his apparel was also conveyed away, wherein I was not well dealt withal and brought again after his escape.

"For the books which are valued at £30. beside the work of Zancheus and an Italian and Spanish Bible, the rest are English books and pamphlets of no value.

"Thus your honourable lordship seeth this great show cometh to small reckoning, but whatsoever it

hath been is due to me. It may please your honour to conceive, this demand is made to keep me from that which is owing me for Mr. Seymour's diet; whereof I received no penny, since Christmas last. I will not say payment was put off until his escape, to defraud me, for my Lord of Hertford gave his word before your honourable lordship, and further affirmed he would not send any money unto Mr. Seymour, but unto me. I spake to Mr. Kyrton often for it, at such time as he came to see me paid.

"Besides my wife laid out for Mr. Seymour £10. for linen whereof he never paid penny.

"So Mr. Seymour oweth to me: and

"for his linen £48. 10.

"To the upholsterer £42. 10.

"To the apothecary of whom from the first time he came to the Tower until his flight, he took physic, £32. 16."[1]

To this document the following note is added by the apothecary:—

"This sum has been due to me for one whole year for physic which Mr. Seymour took at my hands. Whereof there are divers cordials, almond milks, juleps, electuaries and other things very costly.

"JAMES COLWALL."

Thanks to the Lieutenant's detailed account we obtain a fairly accurate picture of Seymour's life in the Tower. Add to this, that the Tower was, as usual, under James' governance, packed with State prisoners, many of whom possessing the "liberty of the place," could communicate with each other, and Seymour's residence there scarcely appears so terrible.

[1] Sir William Waad, Lieutenant of the Tower, to Lord Salisbury. State Papers Dom. James I, lxvii., f. 94. The above copy is quoted from Cooper.

By May, 1611, he was too busy concerning his escape with Arabella to trouble very much about his surroundings. How Arabella was able to correspond with all those outside her prison who aided in her plot has so far never been known. But a passage in Correr's letter of May 25th, 1611, shows the most probable method. "Lady Arabella has obtained leave for Lady Shrewsbury to visit her, which she was not allowed to do in the past."[1] Later, the Earl of Northampton wrote to the King that Lady Shrewsbury had been the sole contriver of Arabella's "bedlam opposition" to his Majesty. Lady Shrewsbury would scarcely have risked putting such counsel on paper, as there was always danger that Arabella's correspondence might be tampered with; and it therefore seems most probable that she had the opportunity of urging it by word of mouth. It was natural enough for Arabella to beg to see her aunt before she started for what was practically exile, and Lady Shrewsbury had not made herself conspicuous by aiding Arabella in any way since her imprisonment, so that no suspicion attached to her.

But how mistrustful James was brought to sanction such a thing it is hard to imagine.

Arabella possessed certain souvenirs of Mary of Scotland—pieces of needlework for the most part—and these Lady Shrewsbury professed herself willing to buy. Apart from their associations with the dead Queen the things were of no considerable value, but Lady Shrewsbury paid no less than £850, and as Mary Talbot was professedly no sentimentalist, and a supply of money was the last thing desirable for their prisoner, it is astonishing that such a transaction

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

passed unnoticed by Arabella's gaolers. Moreover, Arabella shortly after received another large sum from her aunt, this time on the ground of desiring to pay her debts before starting north. Probably through Lady Shrewsbury she communicated with Hugh Crompton, her gentleman-usher, and a man entirely devoted to her, and he and one or two others made arrangements for her departure. William Seymour on his part took his friend Edward Rodney into his confidence, and that gentleman agreed to be in waiting for William outside the Tower with a boat. According to their arrangement, it was necessary for Arabella and William to carefully calculate the time of their departure from their respective prisons if they were to meet at the place from which they must embark. In reality William started far too late. No explanation of this is attempted by his contemporaries, but as it is asserted that he was of an indolent, procrastinating temperament, probably that had something to do with it. Certainly he showed no more alacrity in his escape than in his wooing.

But that is anticipating a little. At Barnet in the beginning of June all was bustle and preparation for the journey to Durham, where the Bishop anxiously awaited his "guest." Apparently the rest had been of much benefit to Arabella as she was brighter and far less anxious than formerly. She was even able to show some interest in the preparations for her comfort, or so at least Sir James thought.

On her side Arabella, or Lady Shrewsbury, was busy with her own private arrangements. It is open to doubt if Lady Shrewsbury's object in effecting the escape was due entirely to her affection for her niece. We know from the Earl's letters that her imprisonment

was not expected to continue for very long. Putting aside Arabella's exaggerated fears, there was little reason for an escape; surely if necessity had arisen later, such a thing could have been accomplished from Durham. But the Countess of Shrewsbury was an ardent Catholic; she had more than once been suspected of tampering with Arabella's religion, and it is possible that she was acting from that motive and also not entirely on her own initiative. Such at any rate was the seventeenth-century theory.

But Arabella, so long as she escaped, probably cared little as to her aunt's motives.

Sir James had announced his intention of starting from East Barnet to Durham on June the 8th, and on the preceding Monday, the 3rd of June, Arabella walked away from Mr. Conyers' house, and from the unsuspicious Sir James for ever.

Here is Mr. John More's account of her flight:—

"Right honourable my very good lord [1]

"The first of this month (by the ordinary of Middleburg) I sent your Lordship some advertisements of small importance, and that which I now send is for the most part of no better stuff. The quick-winged and various fame of my Lady Arabella's and Mr. Seymour's flight will far outstrip the passage of this letter; yet in the certain manner of their escape it may perhaps in some points clear the obscurity of fore-running bruits. On Monday last in the afternoon, my Lady Arabella lying at Mr. Conyers' house near Highgate having induced her keepers and attendants into security by the fair show of conformity and willingness to go on her journey towards Durham (which the next day she must have done),[2] and in the meantime disguising herself by

[1] Winwood. [2] Not until June 8th.

drawing a pair of great French-fashioned hose over her petticoats, putting on a man's doublet, a man-like peruque with long locks over her hair, a black hat, black cloak, russet boots with red tops and a rapier by her side, walked forth between three and four of the clock with Mr. Markham. After they had gone afoot a mile and a half to a sorry inn where Compton attended with their horses, she grew very sick and faint, so as the ostler that held the stirrup said the gentleman would hardly hold out to London. Yet being set on a good gelding astride in an unwonted fashion, the stirring of the horse brought blood enough into her face and so she rid onwards towards Blackwall, where arriving there about six o'clock, finding there in a readiness two men, a gentlewoman and a chambermaid, with one boat full of Mr. Seymour's and her trunks and another boat for their persons, they hasted from thence towards Woolwich. Being come so far they bade the boatmen row on to Gravesend. There the boatmen were desirous to land, but for a double freight were contented to go on to Lee, yet being almost tired by the way, they were fain to lie still at Tilbury whilst the oars went a-land to refresh themselves. Then they proceeded to Lee, and by that time the day appeared and they discovered a ship at anchor a mile beyond them, which was the French barque that waited for them."

Here Mr. More was wrong. Arabella was not to get away quite so easily. When they arrived at her place of embarkment, no French barque was to be seen. They put off, however, to another vessel and roused the captain's suspicions by the large sums of money they offered if he would take them on board. This he refused to do, and later they found the French ship they had originally chartered hovering about some miles from the shore.

Mr. John More continues:—

"Here the lady would have lain at anchor expecting Mr. Seymour, but through the importunity of the followers they forthwith hoisted sail to seaward.

"In the meantime while Mr. Seymour with a peruque and beard of black hair and in a tanny cloth suit, walked alone without suspicion from his lodging out at the great West door of the Tower, following a cart that had brought his billets. From thence he walked along by the Tower Wharf, by the warders of the Fourth Gate and so to the Iron Gate where Rodney was ready with oars to receive him. When they came to Lee and found that the French ship was gone, the billows rising high, they hired a fisherman for twenty shillings to set them aboard a certain ship they saw under sail. That ship they found not to be it they looked for, so they made forwards to the next under sail which was a ship of Newcastle. This with much ado they hired for forty pounds to carry them to Calais. But whether the collier did perform his bargain or no, is not as yet here known. On Tuesday in the afternoon my Lord Treasurer being advertised that the Lady Arabella had made an escape, sent forthwith to the Lieutenant of the Tower to set strait guard over Mr. Seymour, which he after his yare (ready) manner would thoroughly do, that he would; but coming to the prisoner's lodgings he found (to his great amazement) that he was gone from thence one whole day before."

There is, however, another version of Seymour's escape. Mr. Bradley states that Edward Rodney left a letter to be given to Francis Seymour by eight o'clock on Tuesday morning when the culprits hoped to be safe from pursuit, as indeed Arabella could very easily have been had she not insisted on waiting for her husband, who dallied until 8 o'clock in the evening

before starting. The letter was delivered according to Edward's directions, and in spite of its cautious wording was sufficiently disquieting to rouse Francis' fears. He, forthwith, went to the Tower, and unsatisfied by the servants' excuses, insisted on entering William's rooms.

Finding his brother absent he immediately sent for the Lieutenant, who up to that moment had been in happy ignorance of Seymour's flight.

It is possible that both versions may be correct, as the Lord Treasurer might have received the news from East Barnet and despatched his messenger to the Tower, at much the same time as the discovery by Francis and the Lieutenant.

"I may not omit in this relation to insert the simple part of two silly persons; the one called Tom Barber servant to Mr. Seymour who (believing his master spoke bonâ fide,) did according to his instructions tell everyone that came to enquire for his master, that he was newly betaken to his rest being much troubled with the toothache; and when the matter was discovered, did seriously persist to persuade Mr. Lieutenant that he was gone but to lie a night with his wife, and would surely return thither of himself again. The other a minister's wife attending the Lady; who seeing her mistress disguise herself and slip away, was truly persuaded that she intended but to make a private visit to her husband, and did duly attend her return at the time appointed.

"Now the King and the Lords being much disturbed at this unexpected accident, my Lord Treasurer sent orders to the pinnace that lay at the Downs to put presently to sea, first to Calais Road and then to scour up the coast towards Dunkirk. This pinnace spying the aforesaid French barque which lay lingering for Mr. Seymour, made to her, which thereupon offered

to fly towards Calais, and endured thirteen shots of the pinnace before she would strike. In this barque is the Lady taken with her followers and brought back towards the Tower; not so sorry for her own restraint, as she should be glad if Mr. Seymour might escape, whose welfare she protesteth to affect much more than her own.

"In this passionate hurry here was a Proclamation first conceived in very bitter terms, but, by my Lord Treasurer's moderation, seasoned at the print as now you here find it. There are likewise three letters despatched in haste written by Sir Thomas Lake to the King and Queen-Regent of France and to the Archdukes, all written with harsher ink than now if they were to do (I presume) they should be; especially that to the Archdukes, which did seem to pre-suppose their course to tend that way; and all three describing the offence in black colours, and pressing their sending back without delay. Indeed, the general belief was that they intended to settle themselves in Brabant, and that under the favour of the Popish faction; but now I rather think they will be most pitied by the Puritans, and that their course did wholly tend to France. And though for the former I had only my own corrigible imagination, yet for the latter many pregnant reasons do concur: as:—that the ship that did attend them was French; the place Mr. Seymour made for was Calais; the man that made their peruques was a French clock-maker, who is fled with them; and in the ship is said to be found a French post with letters from the Ambassador.

"This proclamation for the Oath is by divers found strange for that it is so general; but where love is, loyalty will not be wanting.

"The number of baronets is now just thirty-six.

"And so, etc.

"Your Lordship's etc.

"JOHN MORE."[1]

[1] Winwood.

Mr. More's sentence, "the King and the Lords being much disturbed," was a very diplomatic way of describing the situation.

The King and the Ministers on receipt of the news of Arabella's flight appear to have entirely lost their heads. Instead of seeing in the affair nothing but the refusal of two lovers to be parted from each other and imprisoned, James seemed to believe in the existence of some terrific plot for depriving him of life and crown. Such schemes had existed before, and James was naturally an absurdly timid man, but this time Prince Henry joined in his terror. Councils were summoned, long anxious debates took place, and the Court was divided into those who believed the worst and those who affected to make light of the matter.

It cost Salisbury a world of trouble before he could prevail upon the King to moderate the terms of the proclamation, which as it finally stood were severe enough.

"A Proclamation concerning the Lady Arbella and William Seymour.

"Whereas we are given to understand, that the Lady Arbella and William Seymour second son to the Lord Beauchamp, being for divers great and heinous offences, committed, the one to our Tower of London, and the other to a special guard, have found the means by the wicked practices of divers lewd persons, as namely, Markham, Crompton, Rodney and others, to break prison, and escape on Monday the third of June, with an intent to transport themselves into foreign parts: We do hereby straightly charge and command all persons whatsoever, upon their allegiance and duty not only to forbear to receive, harbour or assist them in their passage any way, as they will,

answer it at their perils, but upon the like charge and pain, to use the best means they can for their apprehension, and keeping in safe custody, which we will take as an acceptable service.

"Given at our manor of Greenwich, the fourth day of June, in the ninth year of our Reign of Great Britains, France, and Ireland.

"Anno. Dom: 1611."[1]

Salisbury also wrote several letters to the English representatives in foreign capitals, ordering them to obtain the arrest of the runaways wheresoever they should land.

The following letter from the Treasurer to Mr. Trumbull, the English representative in Brussels, shows the importance attached to this step.

"Mr. Trumbull,

"The copy of the enclosed will fully acquaint you with the strange occasion of this sudden Dispatch. It only remains for me to let you know that his Majesty's pleasure is you should presently demand audience of the Archduke; and having delivered the letter to represent unto him how sensible his Majesty shall be of the proceedings that be used towards them in a matter of this nature, wherein friendship ought not to be guided by that which is only visible, but by entering into judgment how far circumstances of persons and pretences may make things dangerous in consequence, though in other examples wanting some such considerations that may be refused which ought now to be granted; upon which ground you shall do well to make this further instance; that the Archdukes will not suffer the world to conceive that their friendship with his Majesty is so weakly grounded, as not to demonstrate on such occasion somewhat more than the

[1] Proclamation Book. Record Office.

ordinary rules of Amity or Treaty may tie them to. And therefore his Majesty doth now require of them that both the Persons and their company if they come within their dominions may be stayed, until upon advertisement of it they may further hear from his Majesty. Though you may conclude that excepting the scorn and example of so great pride and animosity when his Majesty's only clemency hath bred his own offence, there is nothing in these persons relative to themselves, to hold them other than contemptible creatures. This being the effect which his Majesty doth desire, the time admitting no particular relation of the fact nor any long discourse, the rest must depend upon your own discretion, to amplify and enforce the same as you shall see cause.

"They had so good correspondancy, and plotted their escape with such cunning and secrecy, and though they were under several custodies, Mr. Seymour being in the Tower, but had the liberty of the prison, and the Lady Arabella committed to Sir James Croft who was to conduct her to Durham, yet they found means to escape much about one time the Lady getting herself into man's apparel, and the other disguising himself with a false hair and beard and mean apparel. They embarked themselves at Lee yesterday about nine o'clock in the morning, so that if they make not the more haste than I think they can and this messenger be not too slow, you shall have time enough to demand audience and know the Archduke's answer before they come to Brussels.

"And so I commit you to God.

"Your loving Friend

"R. SALISBURY."[1]

It was the sturdy old Lord High Admiral who first recovered sufficient common sense to suggest to the

[1] Winwood.

King that the wind being dead against the culprits, their recapture might possibly still be effected.

Therefore orders were despatched to Admiral Monson by couriers, urged to their utmost speed by the rough drawing of a gallows upon the despatches they carried as a gentle warning to them of the fate of loiterers.

As usual, when a breath of suspicion was in the air, the Catholics suddenly became objects of greater hatred than ever, and a Bill directed against them was the first outcome of Arabella's flight.

"To-day in the forenoon the king who was at Greenwich returned to London. The king and Council have spent the whole day in close consultation. It is thought for certain that the flight took place by the advice and help of some personage of weight, and it is held that Arabella who hitherto has professed the Puritan religion may very easily become a Catholic along with her husband, in the hope of finding protection more easily. The King in Council has published a new order obliging Catholics and Puritans alike to take the Oath of Allegiance which was published last year. Both Parliament and Council thought this the sole way to preserve the king's life."[1]

Add to that Birch's comment—"This design gave his highness (Prince Henry) as well as the king strong apprehension of dangers, that might have followed the success of it, those apprehensions being much heightened by the suggestions of the Scottish party at Court though thought by the English to be well grounded"[2]—and one obtains an excellent idea of the consternation that reigned.

The Lords of the Council had been busy, and a large crop of arrests was the result. Innocent and guilty, of

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.
[2] *Life of Prince Henry.* Birch.

course, suffered alike. Mr. Francis Seymour was ordered to remain in his own lodging, which, if he, on the discovery of the matter, had been the one to notify the Lieutenant, seemed an absurd measure. Two days after the escape he wrote to his grandmother, the Countess of Hertford :—

"My most honoured Lady and Grandmother,

"I hope I shall not need to use any compliments to manifest my vowed service and love unto your Honour, whose favours hath and shall ever tie me to desire and deserve your love, which should I lose by my ill-deserving of your La. I should never be so impudent as to ask it, or if I should, yet should I despair of obtaining the least part thereof. At this time I have no news to write, but that which my heart trembles to think on, when I first heard of it I was enraged, knowing yet would be, their utter undoing a grief unto their friends, and good to none, most hurt unto themselves, what is now become of them is yet uncertain. As for myself who am now confined unto my lodging, only upon suspicion, as am clear of their escape or of any of their practices, as is the child that was but yesterday born, of which time will bear me witness, other news I have none, but when I next write unto your Honour, then shall I truly relate unto you my innocency herein till when I most humbly take my leave daily praying for your La. healthy happiness, and contentment.

"Your ladyship's always to be commanded in all love and duty

"F. SEYMOUR.

"June the 5th. 1611.

"To the right honourable my very singular good Lady and Grandmother the Countess of Hertford these."[1]

[1] State Papers. Record Office.

Francis had previously to this notified the old Earl of his grandson's escape, greatly to his terror and consternation.

He no sooner received the news than he wrote an agitated letter to Lord Salisbury, enclosing that of Francis:

"My Lord,

"this last night at eleventh of the clock, ready to go to bed, I received this letter from my nephew Francis Seymour, which I send your Lordship here enclosed; a letter no less troublesome to me than strange to think I should in these my last days be grandfather of a child that, instead of patience, and tarrying the Lord's leisure (lessons that I learned and prayed for when I was in the same place whereout lewdly he is now escaped) would not tarry for the good hour of favour to come from a gracious and merciful King, as I did, and enjoyed in the end (though long first) from a most worthy and noble Queen, but hath plunged himself further into his Highness' just displeasure. To whose Majesty I do, by these lines, earnestly pray your lordship to signify from me how distasteful this foolish and boyish action is unto me, and that, as at first upon his examination before your Lordships, and his Majesty afterwards, nothing was more offensive unto me, misliking altogether the unfitness and inequality of the match, and the handling of it afterwards worse, so do I condemn this as worst of all in them both.

"Thus, my lord, with an unquiet mind to think (as before) I should be grandfather to any child that hath so much forgotten his duty as he hath now done, and having slept never a wink this night (a bad medicine for one that is not fully recovered of a second great cold I took), I leave your Lordship with my loving commendations to the heavenly protection.

"From Letley, this Thursday morning at four of the clock, the 6th. of June, 1611.

"Your Lordship's most assured loving friend

"HERTFORD.

"As I was reading my said nephew's letter my sise took (as your lordship may perceive) into the bottom of the letter; but the word missing that is burnt is 'Tower to acquaint!'"[1]

Protestations of innocence availed the Earl very little. He received the King's command to travel to London to be examined on the matter by the Council.

The King's heart must have rejoiced at the news of the capture of Arabella, which he speedily received from Admiral Monson, who in return was given orders to see to the conveyance of Arabella to the Tower.

The King's suspicion that some "great personage of weight" had aided his unfortunate cousin had at last borne fruit, and on her arrival at the Tower she found the Countess of Shrewsbury already lodged there.

The following is the list of prisoners as finally amended by the Lords:—

"LIST OF PRISONERS AFTER ARABELLA'S CAPTURE.
ENDORSED COMMITTED BY THE LORDS.[2]

La: Arbella.	In the Tower.
The Ctess. Shrewsbury.	
Fleet.	
Hugh Crompton. Gent.	
Marsh:	
William Markham. Gent.	
Gateh.	
Edward Reeves.	
Mrs. Bradshawe.	
Bonds.	
Bullen, Mr. Seymour's barber.	
Mr. Seymour's butler.	

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 124.

[2] Cooper.

Removed. Sir James Croft. Dr. Moundford.	In the Fleet.
Bonds. Adams, the Minister's wife. Surson, the skipper of Ipswich.	Gatehouse.
Loses his place. Edward Kirton. Gent.	Gatehouse.
Tassin Corvé, the French skipper to be sent to the Ambassador. John Baisley, waterman.	In Newgate.

To be delivered.

Balis, the Earl of Shrewsbury's man, with the Bailiff of Westminster."

Sir John More gives an amusing account of Lady Shrewsbury's behaviour at her examination.

"Right honourable my very good Lord,

"I can now add no matter of moment to my last two letters of the 8th. and 13th. of this month. On Saturday last the Countess of Shrewsbury was lodged in the Tower, where she is like long to rest as well as the Lady Arbella. The last named lady answered the Lords at her examination with good judgment and discretion: But the other is said to be entirely without reason crying out all that is but tricks and giggs; that she will answer nothing in private, that if she have offended the law, she will answer it in public. She is said to have amassed a great sum of money to some ill use; 20,000 pounds are known to be in her cash and that she had made provision for more Bills of Exchange to her niece's use than she had knowledge of. And though the Lady Arbella hath not as yet been found inclinable to popery, yet her aunt made account belike that being beyond the seas in the hands of Jesuits and priests, either the stroke of their arguments or the pinch of poverty, might force her to the other side.

Our Scots and English differ much upon this point. These do hold that if this couple should have escaped, the danger was not like to have been very great, in regard that their pretensions are so many degrees removed, and they ungraceful both in their persons and their houses; so as a hot alarm taken at the matter will make them more illustrious in the world's eye than now they are, or being let alone, ever would have been. But the others aggravate the offence in so strange a manner as that it might be compared to the Powder Treason; and so it is said to fill his Majesty with fearful imaginations, and with him the Prince who cannot easily be moved from any settled opinion."

In a postscript to the above he adds:—

"The Earl of Shrewsbury is restrained to his own house, but I hear of no matter found against him."[1]

Nor, indeed, was any ever found. James had ordered an inquiry into the circumstances of the escape, to be held under the Presidentship of the Earl of Northampton, who on its conclusion presented an interesting abstract of it to the King; and by it plainly established that the Countess of Shrewsbury alone had been the instigator of the escape.

"Most excellent most gracious and most redoubted and dear Sovereign,

"Vouchsafe to accept from your most affectionate and humble servant in a brief abstract the sum of all that we have extracted by this afternoon's labour or are like to work and (?) screw out of a flint by any longer labour if my first aim deceive me not as the mystery hath been involved in one crafty pate to which the principal herself will appear in a sort to be but an accessory.

[1] Winwood. Letter of Sir J. More to Sir R. Winwood, June 18th, 1611.

"Your Majesty hath been advertised before that my La. of Shrewsb. was the only worker and contriver of the Lady's bedlam opposition against your Majesty's direction which beside our knowledge Mr. Chancellor of the Duchy hath infallibly demonstrated both by signs and operations.

"It doth now more manifestly appear that her purse hath been the only instrument of her audacity to undertake and ability to contrive the plot of her escape which should have the beginning or rather the foundation of all the plots that were to follow. But this mystery was managed with so great art as in my judgment we shall never be able to prove more than that my La. of Shrewsbury had by her traffic for a penny some kind of pennyworth, and though we shall be able to prove that at the very time of her preparing means for her escape and chiefly since the time of the ladies going down when you were at Windsor, the greatest part of the money have been paid, though my lady in her bartering hath given £850. for that which was not worth the eighth part of the value, though by confession we can prove that of that £1800 which the lady brought together, £1400 at the least came out of her aunt's purse . . . points to the devisor director and disposer of the plot, yet the matter being carried between them singly that will rather die than discover one another will be drowned in obscurity.

"Your Majesty will find I fear that though Crompton only be the trusty Roger that was confidentially employed from whom there want no means of botting out the bottom of his knowledge yet came the part of his employment to no more than the preparation of means and the receipt of moneys which in appearance were the prices of such implements as the old lady bought of him. The matter was finely managed that whatsoever was to be done after the bird had been freed of her cage by practice in foreign parts yet all contingents were to sleep and by no means to be awaked

nor the greater help supplied till by her escape it should appear what course should be intended by the potentate of foreign parts either in assisting or abandoning; Mean courses were but as *opera proepartona*. The very crisis of the cause itself and the motive of the bounty that should feed that spring from hence was never to be put to proof before the window were opened. This is my private judgment of the cause itself as by sight of attributes *alla prima vista* I can apprehend though your Majesty shall find that no industry shall want that ought to work upon introduction that were most evident. A man may see the cunning of that Lady that intending to work her own haughty ends out of the passion of one that was pliant to advise hath kept within her breast the poison that was to break out by contingency, leaving us to work upon acts intermediate that in the first appearance only regard the satisfaction of a young lady's instant humours, a fit scholar to receive some deeper infusion when time should serve, distance secure, and combination encourage. Mary for the present to be trusted with no more by the lady's instruction fell to her part to act upon the stage of her first . By this which I set down your Majesty will the better guess at the shifts which we are like to find in the fixing when she comes to answer, for I am deceived if in this distress finding herself only chargeable out of the cautions of her own proceeding with the circumstances of the time the corruption of Council and the supply of money she do not answer to the first by pretending ignorance of the plot, upon her niece's denial to the second by a peremptory negative upon confidence in her secrecy, and to the third by excusing of her own value of things bought partly by desire to discharge some part of her niece's debt before her going to Durham, partly to the affection borne to the Queen your mother for whose handyworks she gave £850 though not worth the 8 part of the money."[1]

[1] State Papers. Record Office.

If Mary Talbot hoped to incline the King favourably towards her by that mention of her affection for his mother her hope was vain.

James was a man almost incapable of forgiveness, and "it is a most remarkable fact in this country that if a nobleman is put in the Tower he either loses his life or ends his days there." If the Countess could have known of Molin's naïf remark, how often would she have thought on it ruefully in the years that followed.

CHAPTER XI

ARABELLA had greater experience of imprisonment than her aunt of Shrewsbury, still full of hysterical plaints; yet at first, when her anguished inquiry after Seymour's welfare had been answered by the assurance of his escape, she seemed hardly to heed her own capture in her joy that her husband was at last at liberty.

For the captain of the collier whom Seymour bribed had not played him false, but landed him safely on a foreign shore.

In his letter of June 18th Sir John More relates :—

"As to Mr. Seymour we only hear that he went from Ostend to Bruges and from thence sent a messenger along the coast to Gravelines to hearken after the arrival of his lady, which methinks doth not well cohere with my lady Arabella's protestation that th' intent of them both was absolutely for France and for no other place.

"This greater affair hath retarded the decision of the main different between the civil and common lawyers."[1]

At Ostend he was of course in the Archduke's territory, a circumstance likely to arouse James' alarms to the highest pitch.

Lord Salisbury cautiously communicated the King's sentiments to Mr. Trumbull on the 20th of June, concluding with an expression of his own attitude to Mr. Seymour, which either from policy or from

[1] Winwood.

genuine disapproval of Seymour's action, is very strongly worded.

"Mr. Trumbull,[1]

"I have acquainted his Majesty with your precedings in the business concerning Mr. Seymour, who was pleased in perusing your letter to take notice of the diligence and cautions which you have used therein, although the success hath not been answerable; which he imputeth to the coldness of those ministers who do lend but *sourde oreille* to motions of this nature, and pretend a want of authority when it is merely of will and correspondency. For the letter from the Archduke to his Majesty, it was only an answer of formality; declaring in the general his willingness to give his Majesty such satisfaction (in case those persons should come within his territories) as should agree with the treaty and their mutual amity. Whereupon seeing Mr. Seymour is come thither, and that the Archduke both by his Majesty's letter and by your relation doth sufficiently understand what is now expected on his part, his Majesty's pleasure is you should forbear to urge and press the matter any further, but leave them to do therein what themselves shall best advise; this being a thing of no such consequence, as that his Majesty will make any extraordinary contestation for it, but attend their own motions and judge accordingly. In the meantime so long as he doth remain a proselyte of that country, casting away the duty and obedience with which he was born and betaking himself to protection in those parts, *fit tibi t-anquasu Ethnicus*, forbearing both conversation and his conference saving only according to the instruction in my last; to carry always a watchful eye to observe what entertainment he doth find there; how he is respected; to whom he most applies himself; and what course he purposeth to take, either for his say or his remove. And as you have any means, to let him know this much, that he

[1] Winwood.

will deceive himself if ever he thinks to find favour while he liveth under any of the territories of Spain, Rome or of the Archdukes; in all which places all that are ill-affected only find residence and favour. Where it seems he had some speech with you, of his purpose to write to me his excuse; you may let him understand thus much that howsoever myself with other of the Lords, were contented before in his first falling to extenuate his fact, and to plead in his favour; upon a confidence that seeing his error, the honesty and truth of his heart, encouraged by the goodness of his Majesty towards him, would not suffer him to fall again yet having since deluded our expectations and therein violated his own faith so far as to abuse his Majesty's leniency, I am now neither willing to remember that I have done him any courtesies, neither mean to entertain any acknowledgment of them to me; and therefore if he hath any purpose to write hither to make his peace by the mediation of his friends, let him address his letters either to the Lords in general, or else to those in whom he has a particular interest; for you may assure him that for my own part I am resolved not to receive any letters from him that are directed to me in particular.

"And so I commit you to God.

"Your loving friend.

"R. SALISBURY.

"From Whitehall."

A few days later the Earl of Hertford decided to communicate with his grandchild, but warily forwarded a draft of his proposed letter to the Council and asked for permission before forwarding it to Seymour.

"According to my speech with your L. yesternight I have made the draft of a letter of my disobedient unfortunate grandchild William Seymour and now send it you to ye end your Lordship and ye rest may be

pleased to peruse and correct ye same according to your wisdom, and then returning it to me with your good allowance warranted under your hands that I may boldly do so, I will write it out again; and leave it to be conveyed as your L. shall think best. And even so with my very loving commendations.

"I rest
"Your L. most assured
"Loving friend
"HERTFORD.[1]

"From Littleton
this Wednesday night
ye 26th. of June 1611."

Most likely the enclosed draft was a letter of censure, as the old Earl seemed determined to have to do as little as possible with his grandchild while he was under the royal displeasure.

By the beginning of July the ferment of the King's feelings had somewhat subsided, and he was sufficiently reassured to be able to assume, for the benefit of the Venetian Ambassador, one of his favourite rôles—that of a beneficent fairy-godfather, whose intentions had been most unluckily frustrated at the very moment when he was about to fulfil them.

"The day before yesterday I had audience of the king and after exchange of compliments we passed from one topic to another during the space of nearly an hour. He first of all touched on the Lady Arabella and her flight. He did not hide from me that he had resolved to marry her suitably to her rank; he knew quite well what was right and proper; he hinted that worse might be behind, though he did not seem to attach much importance to it. Then talking of Seymour

[1] State Papers. Record Office.

he said that the Archduke had replied to his request for Seymour's arrest that he would show to his Majesty and to the whole world how much he desired to oblige him, without however making any definite promise. The king thinks that by this time the Archduke has made Seymour leave his estates, nor is he quite satisfied. He desired me to beg your excellences that if Seymour should arrive in your dominions he should be arrested until further communications. He showed no doubt but that he would obtain this favour, as he was sure that your Excellencies would never allow your dominions to become the asylum or bridge to shelter or to give passage to persons of such a character; that such favours were among common use among sovereigns who arrested and extradited bandits for misdeeds which in no way touched the Majesty of any sovereign; he concluded by saying that one who had shown readiness to declare himself an ally in time of danger, need not doubt that he would surely receive such a favour as this. I replied that there is no favour so great that it would not be promptly granted by your Excellencies to please his Majesty; the greater it was the more readily would it be embraced. Continuing on this line I endeavoured to assure His Majesty of the readiness of each and all of your Lordships to oblige him without descending to particulars. The king listened with satisfaction, he showed his conviction that Seymour would go to the state of some other prince; still he would like this favour as a pledge of friendship. The king is much concerned about the flight, more perhaps than he shows, it is commonly held that Seymour will go either to the States of the Pope or of his Catholic Majesty."[1]

Very shortly after this Seymour left the Archduke's dominions warned very likely by his grandfather or by Mr. Trumbull of the impossibility of re-obtaining

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers.

the King's favour so long as he remained there. In July, 1611, Foscarini was told by King James that Seymour had reached Lièges on the confines of Flanders and Germany, where, having travelled so far, he was expected to remain but a very short time before starting for Spain or Italy. For some reason, however—very possibly shortness of money—Seymour remained there almost two months and then contrary to everyone's expectations left for France.

In October, 1611, James "with considerable indignation" told the Venetian Ambassador that Seymour was "seen openly at Paris." He was accompanied by his friend Rodney, greatly to the annoyance of his grandfather.

"My good Lord

"As in all my actions my chief care hath ever been to give his Majesty and ye state full content in what I can; so in this touching my unfortunate grandchild William Seymour I am most desirous to show my readiness, and accordingly have done my uttermost to prevail with Sir John Rodney to undertake this journey unto him. Whose excuse (coming to me hither but yesternight) is disability of body and his answer such notwithstanding all my persuasions as I neither can, nor will any longer depend upon hope of him. The next that I can think fit to offer to your Lordship's consideration is one of my chaplains named John Pelling, a man whom for learning and integrity of life I made especial choice of when my service of Ambassador was commanded in the Low Countries, assuring myself if he should find my foolish boy (being heretofore his scholar) waver in the true religion (wherein he hath been both born, bred, and brought up), he would easily make him find his error before he should be confirmed or settled in the devilish bloody jesuitical doctrine. Of any other likely to do good in

this service, I protest upon my honour I cannot think, but will humbly accept and bear the charge of any that his Majesty and your Lordships shall think fit to be employed and thereunto will add my daily prayer to th' Almighty to guide that ingrat boy with his grace in a religious and dutiful course for his soul's health and toward his Majesty and ye state without further hope of comfort to myself from whom his disobedience and folly have made so great a separation. I could wish young Rodney were removed from him being an unsettled vain youth like to do much more hurt than good about him. As for any occasion of my own likely to draw me to London, I do not yet know any, but if in these business my presence shall be necessary upon notice thereof from your Lordships, I will not forbear to disease myself in ye unwholesome air of London which so much disagreeth with my nature and disposition of body, now in my old age most unfit for unwonted travel, and even so with my loving commendations I rest

"Your Lordships' most assured
"Loving friend
"HERTFORD."[1]

"From Amesbury this
Tuesday night late
the 17th. of September 1611."

The admonitions of the worthy chaplain do not appear to have been very effectual, as Seymour continued to lead the life of an ordinary young man of fashion in Paris. He was frequently in debt and ceaselessly petitioned his grandfather for money. Whether he ever made any attempt to communicate with his imprisoned wife is unknown, but she continued her measures for his comfort, as when she was allowed to receive part of her income there are frequent

[1] Cooper.

mentions in her account-books of sums transmitted to William Seymour.[1] He is said, during the years that followed, to have joined, with other malcontents fled for safety across the Channel, in threats and absurd abortive schemes against King James; but as no preparations were ever made for the fulfilments of the plots, as they remained subjects of conversation only, he was left unmolested and disregarded in his exile.

In 1612, some six months after his escape, he made an attempt at softening the King's anger.

"May it please your most honourable Lordships

"It is no small comfort unto me in my hard misfortunes that I have now opportunity whereby I may show mine obedience unto his sacred Majesty and the state. Were the things commanded me never so difficult, (which I must needs proceeds all from his Majesty's most gracious clemency beyond my desert), God is my witness I would obey and undergo them with as great alacrity as the things I most desire. I acknowledge myself beyond measure bound to your Lordships, for the very mild proceedings which through your honourable mediation I have found: and this encourageth me further to become an humble suitor unto your Lordships for procuring the increase of his most royal Majesty's goodness and benignity towards me, which while I have breath with my utmost endeavour I will daily study to deserve and rest always.

"To be commended by your Lordships in all things

"W. SEYMOUR.

"To the Lords of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council."[2]

Not finding that Salisbury took his request for the

[1] Mr. Bradley. [2] State Papers. Record Office.

removal of Rodney very seriously, the Earl repeated it with reiterated emphasis in November of 1611.

"My good Lord,—As soon after the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 3rd. of last month as the bearer, John Pelling, my chaplain, could come to me for matters, after settling his own affairs, and furnishing himself for the journey to Paris, I thought good to send him to your Lordship to receive his despatch and such further directions as to your Lordship as to your letter and which in your Lordship's most honourable wisdom should seem fit. I, for my own part, have only given him order by word of mouth to deliver my mind to my most unfortunate grandchild, William Seymour, to whom he goeth; but therewith (which he desired to have in writing) to acquaint your Lordship that before his journey you may alter it at your pleasure. And now there doth only rest that I further acquaint your Lordship with my full intent, touching my said grandchild (the sorrow for whose loss is, thanks be to God, almost overcome) which is, sithence I find hope of good conformity in his carriage towards his most excellent Majesty and the state, who may in time restore him to grace, and that I understand his Majesty is pleased I should do, I am content merely to encourage him in a good course so long as his behaviour shall be well approved by his Majesty and the state, out of my poor decayed estate to allow him the same means as his Majesty and your Lordship were pleased I should do when he was first committed to the Tower, which was £200 per annum. (So as by your Lordship's good means I may be assigned to pay it quarterly to some good merchant that shall come into England), Whereby I nor any of mine shall need hereafter to have any further traffic with him so long as he doth stand in the terms he now doth through his own exceeding folly. And herewith I beseech your Lordship acquaint his Majesty and the rest of my Lords that my

faithful and plain forwardness may be rightly conceived, for which and many other honourable favours I shall ever be ready to acknowledge my unfeigned love and thankfulness; and ever rest

"Your Lordship's very loving
assured friend
"HERTFORD.[1]

"From Tottenham this Sunday night late,
the 3rd. of November. 1611.

"*Post sc:* I have heretofore moved your Lordship by my former letters that young Rodney may be drawn away from my grandchild, not only for fear his looseness may do more hurt by his society than any care of other can do good, but for that I understand his friends give him no maintenance, and by that means he is like to be so great a burden for my grandchild's small means, and I do therefore very earnestly pray your Lordship to take some speedy course he may be drawn from thence with this opportunity."

Seymour remained in Paris for about four years, receiving his pardon and permission to return to England only after Arabella's death.[2]

[1] Cooper.

[2] At this point Seymour's history diverges from Arabella's. But a brief outline of his after career may not be out of place here. He married, in April, 1617, Frances, sister and co-heir of Robert, 3rd Earl of Essex, and had several children. His elder brother dying in 1618 (his father had died in 1612) he became Lord Beauchamp, and in 1621 Earl of Hertford. He was created Marquess of Hertford 1640; Governor of the Prince of Wales 1642–3; Lieutenant-General of the royal forces in the West 1642–3; Chancellor of the University of Oxford 1643–6, and again in 1660; Groom of the Stole 1644. Restored to the Dukedom of Somerset in 1660 by the reversal of the attainder of his paternal grandfather the first Duke. He died in 1660, and fifteen years later the Dukedom of Somerset passed from his line. Such was the after career of the youth who, in Arabella's time, seemed but a tame and shadowy figure. He was ambitious, and from his ambition sprang Arabella's ruin; but he lived on to fulfil his dreams, and stands out as one of the great men in seventeenth-century history. When his first daughter was born to him, he called her Arabella—for the memory of his love in those early years, or for the memory of the gracious woman who had loved him and who had suffered for her love.

On the 11th of June the Lieutenant of the Tower wrote to Lord Salisbury anent the captive Arabella: "The Lady expects some directions from your honourable lordship for the Lady Chaworth to be with her." Presumably as lady-in-waiting, but there is no record of her request having been granted. She also begged for the attendance of one Peter, an old servant of hers, who also seems for some time to have been in the service of William Seymour; for Fretwell, an embroiderer, and for her trusty servant Smith, the same who had smuggled the letters between husband and wife in the Lambeth days. Of all her servants we only know certainly of one who was with her in the Tower, her waiting-woman, Mistress Bradshawe. She was, however, permitted, if not at first, the services of Hugh Crompton, who continued to attend to her money matters and keep her accounts.

Both Reeves and Crompton, the most trusted of her servants, were in the Marshalsea prison for some time. From a passage in a letter written shortly after Arabella's committal to the Tower it is probable that Crompton was seriously ill when he was imprisoned, a circumstance little likely to assist his cure.

But about this time Arabella appealed on behalf of both her servants to the Lords of the Council.

"Right honourable my very good Lords,

"I am constrained to trouble you rather than be guilty of the danger of life wherein Hugh Crompton and Edward Reeves, two of my servants lately committed to the Marshalsea for my cause remain. I am informed divers near that prison and in it are lately dead, and divers others sick of contagious and deadly diseases, wherefore I humbly beseech your honours to commiserate their distress and consider that they are

servants, and accomptable for divers debts and reckonings, which if they should die, would be a great prejudice to me and others. And therefore I humbly beseech you to move unto his Majesty my most humble duty and theirs that it will please his Majesty they may be removed to some other healthful air.

"ARBELLA STUART."[1]

The Council Lords at that time were full of business connected with Arabella. She and her aunt of Shrewsbury were brought to trial, and—the result was a foregone conclusion—"remanded" indefinitely to the Tower, which was, under James, synonymous with perpetual imprisonment.

This sentence had apparently not been anticipated by the Countess' family, as far as she herself was concerned, as on the 19th of June her brother Charles had written a letter of consolation to a faithful servant of the family.

"Good Henry Butler,

"I cannot blame you to be greatly grieved at this case, knowing how much she values you for your trust and love to her; but my lord putteth me in good hope that her abode there will not be long and that shortly she shall have the liberty of friends and servants to come unto her. She is appointed the Queen's lodgings and hath three or four fair rooms to walk in. God send her well out of them, as I hope in God she shall. Commend me to Mr. Wingfield and be you both of good cheer, for I understand she had not gone thither if she had answered the Lords, so for that contempt she suffereth. So I bid you heartily farewell.

"Your very loving friend

"CHARLES CAVENDISH.[2]

"Welbeck. June 19. 1611."

[1] Cooper. [2] Costello.

By permission.] [*Photo Oxford University Press.*

G. TALBOT, EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

(Hope Collection of Engravings.)

The Tower, as the Lieutenant complained, had never been so full of persons of "great quality," and he was possibly puzzled as to how to find suitable accommodation for the new-comers. At all events the rooms he gave the Countess were in very bad repair—startlingly so, for surely a prison could hardly be reckoned as a place of safe keeping, if the prisoner was of an active and desperate disposition, when ventilated by such large holes! Probably the complaints of the Countess were amongst those things the Lieutenant professed to find "so troublesome and burdensome," but the burden seemed to sit very lightly on him, as apparently he took no notice of her complaints. She then appealed to her husband, and he in his turn to Lord Treasurer Salisbury.

"I beseech your Lordship to give order, in writing or otherwise, as it pleaseth you, that there may presently be wainscot leaves set up for the nether window in those two rooms where my wife liveth and eateth, and so many partition boards to be set up before the doors as in all would make but one small portal, and a piece of a roof mended not half a yard broad and one yard long, at which now the skies may be seen. This is her request to me this morning to be a suitor for your Lordship; if this may pass by immediate warrant I desire it, or else not. And so I rest ever

"Your Lordship's to command

"GILBERT SHREWSBURY."[1]

It seems now a curious and cumbersome way of obtaining necessary repairs to a state building.

Equally curious was the way in which James paid the expenses attendant on Arabella's capture and journey to the Tower.

[1] Cooper.

"That they cause all such sums of money as are to be defrayed by his Majesty for the charges of apprehension of the Lady Arabella and her company, and her bringing up, to be paid out of such gold as hath been found upon her or in her company or which hereafter shall be found to have been upon her or in her company at the time of her escape."[1]

There is a wry kind of humour in that making the prisoner pay the charges for her so little desired capture. How Mary Talbot would storm when she heard of the use to which her precious hoards had been put.

Arabella's jewels were taken from her, and part sold to pay her debts, yet later some must have been restored to her, as she begged permission for one Yelverton to receive them, and later still we find her complaining that some had been stolen from her.

At the commencement of her imprisonment Arabella did her best to keep her mind from dwelling on her troubles, and busied herself with needlework, making and sending forth gifts of "handwork"—ineffectual bribes for pity—as another Stuart captive had done not so very long before. But after a little all hope of liberty deserted her, despair seized her, and from time to time she was very ill.

Yet she never ceased to petition for her freedom, though she must have been well aware how useless it was to seek to placate the King's wrath; how useless to hope that any courtier would dare to plead a broken cause, when such pleading might ruin him. And yet Arabella could not resist writing endlessly. Perhaps she felt that if once she ceased to agitate for liberty, if she acquiesced submissively in her fate, she deserved to be deserted and forgotten. Fiercely, all her life, had

[1] State Papers, James I., vol. lxiv. Docket Book.

the battle-spirit burnt within her, not yet would she own defeat.

"My Lord

"my extremity constraining me to labour to all my friends to become suitors to his Majesty for his pardon of my fault, and my weakness not permitting me to write particularly, I have made choice of your lordship, humbly beseeching you to move as many as have any compassion of my affliction to join in humble mediation to his Majesty to forgive me the most penitent and sorrowful creature that breathes.

"Your distressed cousin

"A. S."[1]

Possibly about the same time she wrote to one possessed of influence, to pray him, though he scarcely knew her, to use it for her cause.

"Sir, Though you be almost a stranger to me, but only by sight, yet the good opinion I generally hear to be held of your worth, together with the great interest you have in my Lo. of Northampton's favour, makes me thus far presume of your willingness to do a poor afflicted gentlewoman that good office (if in no other respect, yet because I am a Christian) as to further me with your best endeavours to his Lo. that it will please him to help me out of this great distress and misery and regain me his Majesty's favour which is my chiefest desire. Wherein his Lo. may do a deed acceptable to God and honourable to himself, and I shall be infinitely bound to his Lo. and beholden to you, who now till I receive some comfort from his Majesty rest

"The most sorrowful creature living

"ARBELLA SEYMOURE."[2]

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 149. The name of the person to whom it was written is unknown. The date also is missing.

[2] Quoted from Hunter's *Hallamshire*.

In an equally reasonable tone is this letter of Arabella's, which was probably to Salisbury.

"My Lord,

"The nobleness of your nature and the good opinion it has pleased your lordship to hold of me heretofore emboldeneth me to beseech your lordship to enter into consideration of my distress, and to be touched by the misery I am in for want of his Majesty's favour, whose clemency and mercy is such that, if it would please ye to make my grief known, and how nearly it toucheth my heart that it hath been my hard fortune to offend his Majesty, I cannot doubt but it would gain me both mitigation of the hard doom and mercy in some measure to yield comfort to my soul, overwhelmed with the extremity of grief which hath almost brought me to the brink of the grave. I beseech your lordship deal so with me as my prayers may gain you God's reward for his sake, though it be but a cup of cold water. I mean any small hope of intercession of his Majesty's displeasure shall be most thankfully received by me. And I doubt not but, if it please your lordship to try your excellent gift of speech, his Majesty will lend a gracious ear to your lordship, and I shall rest ever bound to pray for your lordship's happiness, who now myself rest the most unfortunate and afflicted creature living.

"A. S."[1]

But the months passed on, and her prayers remained unanswered. Towards Christmas (1611), Arabella wrote another petition to the King, and forwarded it with the following letter to the Queen, hoping that by some chance the Christmas spirit should touch the King's heart.

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 104, copy (undated) of original. No name is given, but it was most probably addressed to Salisbury.

"May it please your most excellent Majesty to consider how long I have lived a spectacle of his Majesty's displeasure, to my unspeakable grief, and out of that gracious disposition which moveth your royal mind to compassion of the distressed, may it please your Majesty to move his Majesty in my behalf. I have presumed to present your Majesty herewith the copy of my humble petition to his Majesty against this time, when the rather I am sure his Majesty forgiveth greater offences as freely as he desires to be forgiven by Him whose sacrament he is to receive; though your Majesty's intercession at any time I know were sufficient. Thus my long experience of your Majesty's gracious favour to me and all good causes encourages me to presume to address myself unto your Majesty, and increased the obligation of my duty in praying continually unto the Almighty for your Majesty's felicity in all things.

"And in all humility I remain

"Your Majesty's."[1]

Arabella was fated to bring disaster to the Shrewsbury ladies. Her old grandmother before she died had felt her love for her grandchild change to hate. She had led the girl a weary life because, instead of fulfilling the ambitions her birth aroused, she brought a Queen's anger, and all that the loss of a Queen's favour meant, upon Bess of Hardwick.

Mary Talbot had shared in those ambitions, and as tenacious of purpose as had been her mother, she had clung to them in spite of many proofs to show their folly. She had not the clear-sighted judgment of her mother, who knew the time to hold her hand and the time to strike a blow; and lacking that, she lacked everything likely to make her scheme successful. And of all her projects, her last had been the most absurd.

[1] Draft. Harley MSS., 7003, f. 78.

Arabella, in plotting to escape, had a single and comprehensible motive; she was separated, arbitrarily as she considered, from her husband, and she meant to regain him, so she planned for her liberty. Her temperament and her situation both hindered her from looking at the matter calmly. She had powerful friends, and in their opinion the regaining of her liberty was but a matter of time. Understanding the King as well as she did, she must have known when she married Seymour how wrathful he would be. In the last reign, for a like offence, Katherine Grey had been committed to the Tower, and remained there seven years. With such an example, James would consider Arabella but lightly punished by separation from her husband and confinement to a gentleman's house. Could Arabella have summoned sufficient patience to endure for a few months longer, she might possibly have been spared the years of suffering her rashness brought upon herself. It was, at any rate, one would have thought, worth the trial. But Arabella was not, while at Barnet, capable of reasoning clearly. Sir James Croft shows that when he speaks of her fears as being out of all proportion to anything that could possibly happen to her. It was as if her mind—logical enough at ordinary times—became unstable in moments of excitement.

But the Countess of Shrewsbury was not suffering from the same excitement. Nor had she the excuse of planning Arabella's escape from love and pity for her niece. It seems tolerably clear from their letters that of the two Talbots, Gilbert and Mary, the former had far more affection for Arabella than the latter, and yet Gilbert Shrewsbury counselled patience and never suggested escape. The Countess of Shrewsbury

certainly aided Arabella from motives of her own, partly connected with her religion and partly, as was admitted in her own time, with her ambition. Certainly Arabella on the Continent in hostile hands could have been used as an embarrassment for the English King, but it is a little difficult now to see what good that could do to the Countess. Possibly she scarcely saw it herself, but being of a restless, meddlesome disposition, any excuse was sufficiently good that allowed her to assume her favourite rôle of *intrigante*.

But her behaviour after her arrest was quite as foolish and incomprehensible as the rest of her doings. Her refusal to answer the Council was absurd; had she done so she would probably never have been sent to the Tower, "for I understand she had not gone thither if she had answered the Lords, so for that contempt she suffereth," wrote her brother in 1611.

She had not been long in prison when she was granted the "liberty of the Tower." Moreover, she was on more than one occasion allowed to leave the Tower to nurse her husband, who was frequently ill, though she returned prisonwards upon his recovery.

The Earl was deeply in debt, and the trouble his monetary affairs caused him, added to his other anxieties, seriously affected his health. He did not, however, after the trouble caused by his wife, lose the King's regard, as in 1614 Sir Ralph Winwood writes that on the 18th of July "the King goes to visit the Earl of Shrewsbury," returning by Woodstock and Rycot.[1]

In July, 1613, the Countess of Shrewsbury was again before the Council.[1] But she still persisted in refusing to answer questions pleading the privilege of her

[1] Calendar of Dom. State Papers.

nobility as excuse, and so she was remanded indefinitely to the Tower. On the 23rd of January, 1613, Carleton wrote that the Countess was in closer restraint, on account of some information given against her by Arabella.[1] What this information was precisely is not known, but it is always believed to have been the outcome of Arabella's disordered imagination, as it occurred shortly before the first mention of her insanity. Yet on April 29th Chamberlain wrote that the Countess of Shrewsbury was more restrained and *on good cause*, and in May she was still a close prisoner. By that time, however, the King had grown suspicious of the relations of Arabella and another prisoner in the Tower, and probably the Countess was suspected of again aiding her niece in some mischief. So throughout her stay in the Tower, the Countess alternated between "close restraint" and the "liberty of the place." Some time before or about the time of her husband's death, which took place on May 8th, 1616, she seems to have regained her liberty completely. Imprisonment, however, had taught her nothing, and when a rumour arose as to the birth of a child to Arabella years before in her captivity, her unwise speech again attracted notice. This rumour, of course, seriously afflicted the King, who greatly magnified the danger, and the result was that the Countess was rearrested in 1618.

"The King has again imprisoned the Countess of Shrewsbury, because he wished to elicit certain information in proof that when in the Tower contrary to what was asserted at the time, no children were born to the Lady Arabella which the Countess who was there with her had promised to vouch for if necessary,

[1] Calendar of Dom. State Papers.

yet at this present when called upon for her testimony, she refused to utter a single word, saying that 'she had vowed to God never to speak on the subject again.'"[1]

In the Report of the Star Chamber proceedings on Friday, June 26th, 1618, the Countess' offence is given thus:—

"There was a rumour that the Lady Arabella had a child, voiced, but not believed, hissed at by all the common sort, slighted by the greater, listened to as a fable, till at last it landed at the ears of this great lady, from whom it received not light as the first author but belief as it is suspected."[2]

Certainly the Countess did not grow in wisdom as she grew in years.

"The King to trample down this false form thought it fit to search the secret closets of this lady's breast, none so much acquainted with her secrets nor the walls of her heart.

"First this great lady was called before the Lord of Canterbury,[3] and the Secretary Nanton. She refused to make answer for a pretended vow. The king's finger was but light at the first; she was only restrained to the Lord of London's,[4] a place rather of pastime than punishment. Four days after she was sent for to the Council-table where she still denied to answer, continued her contempt, which much increased her offence. Sir Edward Coke . . . then put her in mind of the punishment now so near, she patiently heard, but refused to answer, the reason was her tongue was laid asleep by a vow."

[1] Calendar of Venetian State Papers, June, 1618.
[2] State Papers. Record Office.
[3] The Archbishop. [4] The Bishop.

On the 4th and 8th of June she again refused to answer, and upon the 22nd she gave her reasons for her behaviour:—

"That seven years since (in 1611 after the escape) she had been examined, and it was told her that she had committed a greater offence by her answer, than if she had not spoken at all, therefore her weakness considered she vowed, that she would never answer more to matters of State and so craved pardon for her refusal; affirming that it was not out of wilfulness but weakness and she would not answer to these nor any other articles by reason of her vow during her life, and so refused further answer."

Truly the Countess' obstinacy matched the King's. The report continues with the examination of witnesses and the disproval of the rumour, and the proceedings concluded with the sentence—a fine of £20,000 and perpetual imprisonment.

Immediately after the sentence had been pronounced the Countess found her tongue:—

"The lady alleged she had been punished before for the same offence, that she was deluded, she expected rather a grace than a censure; that she had not notice time enough of the day; that if she had known thereof she would have been prepared to give the Lords an answer to their content . . . and humbly desired their lordships to be a means to his Majesty for his gracious favour. And so the Lieutenant of the Tower was commanded to take her away and she departed."

A month or two later on one more characteristic mention occurs. It is remarked on the 12th September that the Earl of Northumberland and the Countess of Shrewsbury have taken all the best rooms in the Tower between them.[1]

[1] Calendar Dom. State Papers.

Then silence envelops the Countess for four years, years in which she had time to repent and despair before she wrote her petition:—

"May it please your lordships, that notwithstanding your honourable care for the delivering of the warrant for my liberty, I have not yet received it. His Majesty hath signed one and your lordships another. I have often sent but as still delayed. My assured hope is that your lordships after this long delay will be pleased that I may have the benefit of his Majesty's warrant. Mr. Secretary Calvert sent me word, that though I had been long delayed, for now I am clearly discharged where before I was confined, I am not in for . . . felony, or treason. No lord nor lady that hath been from hence these twelve years (for so long it is since in my old age, I have been placed in this Tower) hath been confined to any man, the worst was to their own house, or such places as they made use of. I beseech your lordships that I may not be a precedent of miserable fortune. I was committed by your lordships; my fine was £20,000, for which my whole estate, lands and goods, were taken out of my hands, and so to this day doth continue, about five years hence. Others that were fined £30,000 paid some £5000 some £10,000, and that in divers years. Again I presume to beseech your lordships to procure me a more happy end, than in all things to be a spectacle to the world of miserable misfortune. His Majesty did graciously about three years since, and in divers times since; but by procuring my servants to forbear this taking out of my warrant, I could receive no benefit of his Majesty's gracious favour to me and so remain a miserable creature, for want of health, liberty, and means to relieve myself, and to do those things which I am bound before God and the world to perform. I am well assured that it is not his Majesty's intent that I should endure so many strange wrongs,

but one of my miseries is that I have none that will truly inform his Majesty. Since I was fined and committed by your lordships, give me leave without offence to beseech your lordships most humbly, in my behalf, to invite his Majesty to put an end to my long delayed cause, which depends wholly on his justice and favour. There never was confinement spoken of in all the times his Majesty released me, nor in my warrant, when I formerly went out of the Tower. My griefs make me . . . too tedious to your lordships, therefore I will leave it to your lordships to show what compassion you think fit, and will pray the Highest ever to guide and protect you."[1]

And that is the last word of the Countess' story in so far as it was dependent upon Arabella and her fate.

But the fortunes of the Countess of Shrewsbury have proved rather a wide digression.

In 1613 all England was excited over the marriage of the Lady Elizabeth of England and the Prince Palatine. Masques, tournaments, dresses, and jewels, displays of every sort, were the only subjects of conversation possible. Did Arabella hope that amidst the joys of Lady Elizabeth she would find time to pray her father for the release of her cousin? In February, Arabella, "though still in the Tower, has shown her joy by buying four new gowns, one of which cost £1,500."[2]

It is to be hoped she found pleasure in the planning of those new gowns and in the thought of Elizabeth's happiness, for no other purpose was served by her loyal demonstration.

True, the Prince Palatine's thoughts did turn to one

[1] Quoted from Birch.
[2] Calendar Dom. State Papers.

prisoner in the Tower, but not to Arabella. He begged the King to release Lord Grey, who had been imprisoned for supposed complicity in the "Main" plot, and received a very decisive negative.

"The king refused a suit of the Prince Palatine for the delivery of Lord Grey and several other requests which made the Prince complain that he was treated as a child rather than as a son," writes Chamberlain on the 29th of April, 1613. He concludes with the startling remark: "Lord Grey and Lady Arabella are kept more closely than before, because he sent her love messages by one of her women."[1] This is rendered all the more extraordinary by a letter of Chamberlain's written only five weeks before, in which he says, "Lady Arabella ill of convulsions and said to be distracted."[1] This, by the way, is the first mention of any doubt as to Arabella's sanity, but from Lord Grey's behaviour it is to be supposed she had by that time recovered.

It is unfortunate that we do not know how James received the news of Lord Grey's love-messages to Arabella, his attitude would have been interesting. He had spent almost eight years of his reign in keeping one woman from love and marriage, and when he found that he had failed, he committed her to the Tower, shut her away in safety, made an end, as it were, of her social existence. And then he is told that Lord Grey sends love-messages by one of the culprit's women.

The immediate result was that on the 19th of May Sir Thomas Lake was able to report that Lord Grey was made a close prisoner.[1] So the last gleam of love that fell across Arabella's path was extinguished for ever.

[1] Calendar Dom. State Papers.

Meantime Arabella complained that certain of her jewels were taken from her. Inquiries ensued, and about May 13th Sir William Waad was discharged from the Lieutenancy of the Tower and his place filled by Sir Gervase Helwys.

It is very doubtful whether Sir William had anything to do with the disappearance of the jewels. If he had, he was never punished further than by his dismissal, and he seems to have held and retained minor posts. Later, a complaint was preferred against him that he had been too easy during his governorship of the Tower in allowing access of servants and friends to his prisoners.

Suspicion in regard to the matter of the jewels seems to have fallen more on his daughter, as on May 19th, 1613, Sir Thomas Lake writes that she is imprisoned and "others" examined as to offences in the Tower.[1]

Whether Arabella's jewels were ever restored to her one does not know. In this year of 1613 one more delusive hope of liberty was given to her, and it came about thus.

By 1613 Hugh Crompton was again at liberty, and his first care as a free man was to conceive some way of escape for his unfortunate mistress.

The different stories of devotion to Arabella by her servants proved by this willingness to run great risks for her sake are splendid evidence of the charm of her personality and of the sympathy she awoke in those who knew her best. Crompton had aided her to escape from Lambeth and in consequence passed a couple of years in prison, yet the only use he cared to make of his freedom did but court a repetition of his punishment. How this escape was planned and how betrayed

[1] The endorsement also bears the date 25th November, 1613.

it is impossible now to say. The only paper bearing on it is so vague that were it not for its endorsement,[1] "Arabella," it would be difficult to say to whom it referred.

"Sweet Lord,

"That his Majesty by your Lordship may receive a true account of my Lord Chamberlain's duty and mine in commanding the prisoner I hold it my part to advertise you that though a letter was in drawing with an humble suit for longer leave yet upon better advertisement my Lord resolves to-morrow to send her back to Mr. Lieutenant which being done his Majesty may consider of the next motive that shall be made for more liberty.

"With much ado and withal by very good fortune we have hit upon the place destined to this escape. It falls out to be under a study of Mr. Ruthven's, but of these things I shall have occasion before it be long to deal more thoroughly. In the meantime his Majesty will be pleased to reserve this secret from all the world but yourself till we sound the bottom, for it hath thus far been carried with a great deal of art in reservedness.

"After that some of their meetings have had their turns the fairest light that we can ever have will appear and his Majesty shall receive by your Lordship the humble advice of his two creatures the Chamberlain and myself touching the managing of the mystery which his wisdom may enforce or alter at his pleasure.

"Thus wishing to your lordship all increase of honour, health and happiness agreeably to your own worthy desires I end in haste and ever rest

"Your lordship's affectionate servant
to be commanded
"NORTHAMPTON."[2]

[1] The endorsement also bears the date 25th November, 1613.
[2] State Papers. Dom. James I. Vol. 75, No. 23.

Unfortunately his promised discoveries do not seem to be anywhere recorded.

"My lord" who sends back the "prisoner" is presumably Lord Shrewsbury, but opinions are divided as to whether the prisoner is Lady Shrewsbury or Arabella.[1] On November 23rd, 1613, the Earl of Northampton sent certain of the King's directions by the Lieutenant of the Tower who was to take home the prisoner.[2] No name appears to be given in the document, but the editor of the Calendar has placed in brackets "Lady Arabella." Surely if Arabella, sane or insane, was ever allowed to leave her prison collectors of gossip would have heard and noted the fact. Nor does it seem very probable that James' fears would permit such a course; and Arabella's letters and petitions begging drearily for liberty would lose a great deal of their point if she was in the habit of leaving the Tower on visits. We do know, however, that Lady Shrewsbury was allowed to do so, and if any mischief was brewing regarding Arabella, James would certainly be anxious to have her aunt again in safe keeping. There is in the letter I have given another clue to the riddle; the way of escape was "under Mr. Ruthven's study." Surely, if Arabella had been with Lord Shrewsbury, it would have been easier for Crompton to plan an escape for her there than to wait till she returned to the Tower. That the flight was to be from the Tower is certain from the allusion to Mr. Ruthven. On September 13th of the preceding year Mr. Ruthven[3] was in the Tower, and that he was also there on July 8th we know, as Chamberlain writes

[1] Mr. Inderwick is in favour of Arabella and Mr. Bradley of Lady Shrewsbury.

[2] Calendar of Dom. State Papers.

[3] He was the Earl of Gowrie's brother.

of the quarrel of the Earl of Northumberland with Ruthven in "the Tower Garden."

There is no doubt that Northampton carried out his policy of watching the conspirators, and, when he had discovered sufficient, of arresting them, as in a letter of Chamberlain's on July 7th, 1614, he mentions that one Dr. Palmer and "Crompton the gentleman-usher" have been committed to the Tower for "some business concerning Arabella." In the same letter he speaks of her as "far out of frame this midsummer moon."[1]

Now these few mentions in Chamberlain's letters are all the evidence we have on which the statement of Arabella's lunacy during her imprisonment rests. But writers, contemporary or following shortly afterwards, who would certainly not have had access to those letters, constantly affirm that she died mad, so that the rumour must have been general at the time. The most probable theory is that Arabella had either attacks of hysteria similar to those she suffered from in 1603, and so violent as to be taken for insanity by the ignorant of her day, or that she was insane intermittently only. In view of such of her letters as were undoubtedly written in the Tower it is impossible to believe that she passed the few remaining years of her life the raving lunatic tradition depicts her.

But at last imprisonment had broken her spirit; she could no longer write calmly, eloquently. Yet once again she tried to soften the King's heart; only a fragment of this petition remains.

"In all humility—in most humble wise—the most wretched and unfortunate creature that ever lived, prostrates itself at the feet of the most merciful king that ever was, desiring nothing but mercy and favour,

[1] Calendar of State Papers. Dom. James I. Vol. 77, No. 58.

not being more afflicted in anything than for the loss of that which hath been this long time the only comfort it had in the world, and which if were to do again, I would not adventure the loss of for any other worldly comfort. Mercy it is that I require and that for God's sake. Let either Freake or——" (torn off)[1]

Surely the horror of the years she feared to spend within a prison's walls culminated as she wrote those last lines. Weak in body, weak in mind, terrors crowded thickly round her, tore from her that anguished cry, "Mercy it is that I require and that for God's sake."

But James, in his great wisdom, knew this woman, feeble in mind and body, as a menace to his safety, to his crown. He feared her as a possible tool in the hands of others, he hated her for having shown to the world how lightly she regarded his orders; only by continued punishment could his wounded pride be healed, he could see no dignity in mercy.

A month after the imprisonment of Crompton, Arabella, professing herself weary of life, lay down upon the bed from which she resolutely refused to rise again.

"Help will come too late, and be assured that neither physician nor other, but whom I think good, shall come about me while I live, till I have his Majesty's favour without which I desire not to live. And, if you remember of old I dare die, so I be not guilty of my own death, and oppress others with my ruin too, if there be no other way, as God forbid, to whom I commit you. I could not be so unchristian as to be the cause of my own death. Consider what the

[1] Harley MSS., 7003, f. 146.

world would conceive if I should be violently enforced to do it."[1]

Lying there in her prison she refused to be comforted. If she might not live with liberty, then would she die. For a year she rejected all remedies, and the help of her physicians. She had always been delicate —she suffered from a "chronic and long sickness," and her negligence increased it.

On the 25th of September, 1615, she regained her liberty for ever. The air was full of rumours, the world spoke of Sir Thomas Overbury, who had died but a little while before in the Tower, hurled accusations at the King's favourite and his wife, declaring that they were Overbury's poisoners. The King himself was glanced askance at, while men whispered how deep was he in his favourite's confidence, and then came the news of Arabella's death. In a moment grew up the suspicion that she too had been poisoned, and in hot haste Sir Ralph Winwood sent orders for a post-mortem. It was performed by Dr. Moundford and five other members of the College of Physicians, at eight o'clock on the morning of September 28th. The report was able to calm the fears of the people and prove that Arabella's death was due to natural causes. She was embalmed at night, and her coffin was placed in the Henry the Seventh Chapel of Westminster Abbey by the side of Mary of Scotland. She was dead; and what followed at the Court upon her death is told by the Venetian Ambassador on the 16th of October, 1615.

"I, Foscarini, reported the death of Madame Arabella. As she was so near a relation of the King

[1] Quoted from Costello's *Memoirs*.

and of such high rank, we think it right to add that they have debated whether they should put on mourning as the Queen desired, and where she should be buried. They decided that as she had died in some respects contumacious, the court should not put on mourning, and that she should be buried wherever her people desired. Accordingly she has been placed in the same tomb as her grandmother in the royal burial place near that of the Prince. . . . Her death is deplored by a great number of the chief of the people. The King has not said a word about it."

THE END

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